

TRADING IN TONGUES

The Linguistic Identity of the Nação Portuguesa

By

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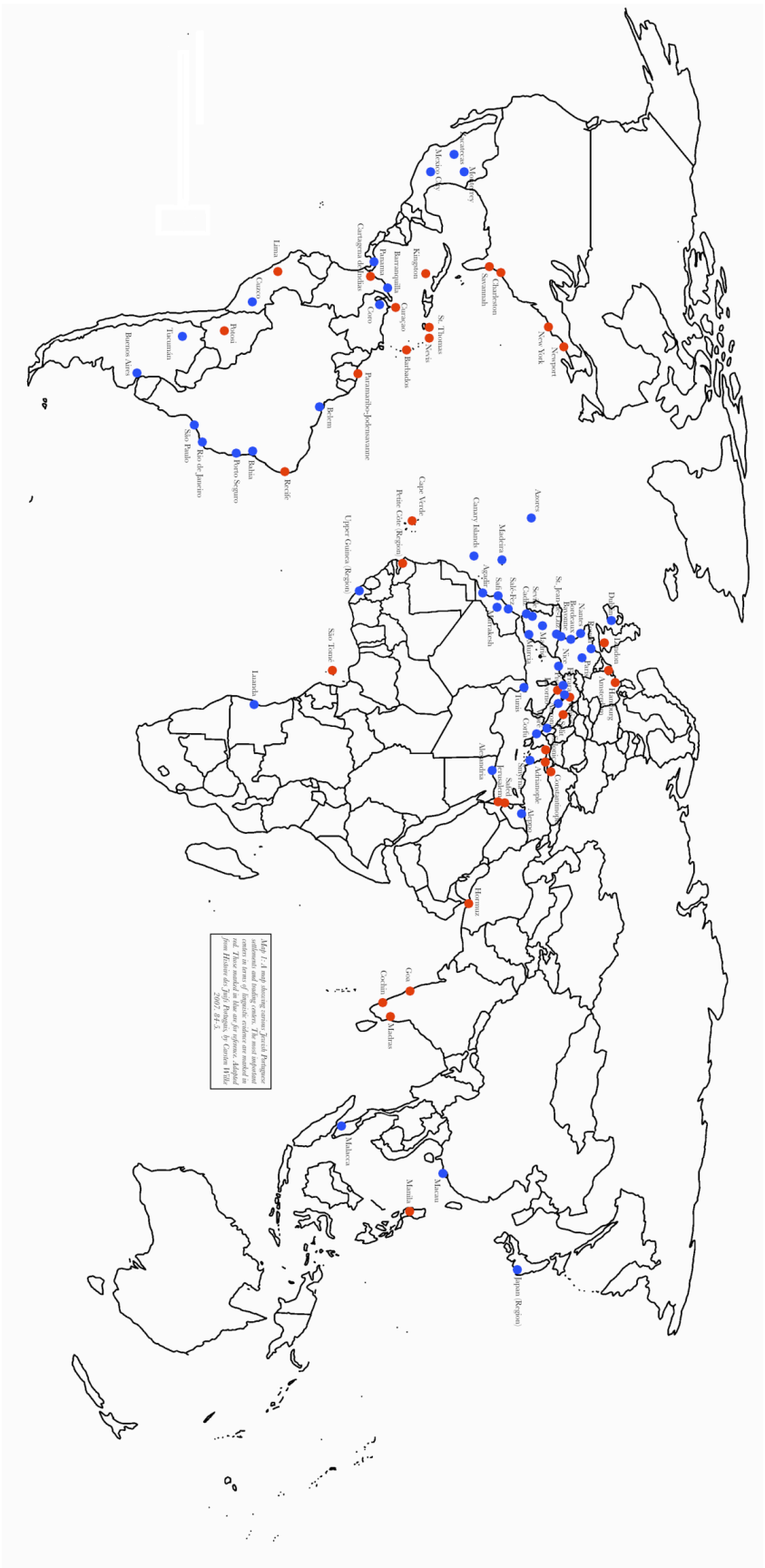
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INTRODUCTION

Jewish Languages and the Luso-Sephardim

After the forced expulsion and conversion to Catholicism of Portuguese Jews in 1497, a network of New Christians, crypto-Jews, and Jewish exiles dispersed across the known world to create an interlocking continuum of kinship and identity, known as the *nação portuguesa*.¹ References to such an entity—"the Portuguese Nation"—extend back in time to the Middle Ages, when Portuguese traders (whether Jewish, Muslim, or Christian) were major brokers of goods between North Africa, the Middle East, and northern Europe.² However, *os da nação*, or "those of the Portuguese nation," came to be synonymous with the Jewish religion through the hands of the oppressors themselves, more specifically, the Inquisition.³ Formally beginning in 1536 in Portugal, the threat of the pyres forced the Luso-Sephardim⁴ to leave the small Portuguese kingdom, forcing them for the next centuries to look back from the outside at their past *grandeza*, (or Iberian grandeur) and despoiled Jewish continuity.

However, exile placed in effect a vastly diffused system of compatriots who, precisely by their mobilization, came to gain a unique advantage in early modern commerce. During this period European colonial empires had just begun to develop, and therefore the ambiguous identity of the Luso-Sephardim situated its members as the perfect in-betweens within an economic structure of cross-cultural exchange. A Dutch Portuguese Jew could more easily navigate around an embargo with Portugal through contacts with nearby Hamburg; or a Jewish merchant in Hormuz could transport precious supplies from Dutch Jakarta to the viceroy in Portuguese Goa, etc. By the 18th century, "Portuguese merchant" and "Jew" were widely regarded as one and the same within commercial networks.⁵

Although the circuits of these interconnected traders are well-attested in our sources and archives, situating the Luso-Sephardim poses a more arduous challenge. Many members of the

¹ This is including the estimated third of exiled Jews from Spain in 1492, who came to reside in neighboring Portugal either permanently or temporarily; cf. Tavares 1982; Marcocci 2013.

² Studnicki-Gizbert, Daviken "La Nación among the Nations: Portuguese and Other Maritime Trading Diasporas in the Atlantic, Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries" in Kagan 2009, 75.

³ Reference to merchants of "Portuguese Nation" can be found in documents from the late Middle Ages. However, only in the early modern period does the term become associated with Jewish Portuguese tradesmen.

⁴ This term refers to Portuguese Jewish exiles that came to identify with and practice Judaism either in Portugal or the diaspora.

⁵ Boxer 1977, 272.

nação portuguesa were unrooted merchants, who often settled indefinitely in almost every major and minor port from the 15th century up to present. Political factors also affected their movement, either directly (especially in Portuguese territories), or indirectly (by wanes in industry or legal restrictions). Nonetheless, major settlements are recorded—even if they only represent brief outposts—across Europe, Africa, Asia and North and South America (see Map 1).⁶

But what drove the perpetuation of a dual Portuguese and Jewish identity across the limits of the *nação portuguesa*? Many studies focus on the social, religious, and economic dimensions of the Luso-Sephardim,⁷ all of which are equally important in contextualizing the kin-affiliation characteristic of the Portuguese diaspora. Yet relatively little attention has been placed on the linguistic makeup of this diaspora. It is the aim of this study to analyze language usage in the *nação portuguesa*, especially with regards to the variety of Portuguese used in certain Luso-Sephardic centers, and its identificatory significance. Naturally, the adoption of the Portuguese language (sometimes imprecisely referred to as Judeo-Portuguese⁸) on the part of the Jewish exiles was tantamount to perpetuating a cultural affiliation with Iberia, and was certainly essential to an *ethnos* embedded (at least initially) within Portuguese-based trading circuits. As far as the Luso-Sephardim moved beyond the peninsula of their origins, they nonetheless clung to it tightly, integrating the culturally-linked languages of Iberian Judaism (Hebrew, Judeo-Spanish, and Ladino⁹) with spoken Portuguese and other local languages.

However, before speaking specifically about linguistic structure, usage, and identity within the *nação portuguesa*, a brief theoretical outline must be set for defining a Jewish Language, especially within a sociolinguistic framework.

⁶ Wilke 2007, 84-85.

⁷ Cf. Bodian 1997, Swetschinski 2000, Israel 1985, Davis 2001, Disney 2009, Silva 2011.

⁸ As explained below, “Jewish varieties of Portuguese” will be the preferred terminology.

⁹ Paul Wexler draws a noteworthy distinction between Judeo-Spanish and Ladino. Ladino should be distinguished as a calque (literal word-for-word) translation to Castilian from Biblical Hebrew, used specifically for religious texts. Judeo-Spanish represents 15th-century Spanish spoken by Jews (whose character changes after the expulsion), used as a vernacular in both spoken and written contexts. The calque features of Ladino suggest a Judeo-Iberian familiarity with such linguistic tradition. The Constantine Bible (1647) and the Ferrara Bible (1553) Ladino translations markedly differ syntactically from other pre-expulsion peninsular publications. Calque translations were common until the 17th century, after which time Judeo-Spanish and Judeo-Portuguese publications began to emerge in Amsterdam. Paul Wexler also notes that Ladino translations made by Portuguese Jews are more linguistically Castilian in nature, and that further studies should be conducted to systematically compare such translation between Spanish and Portuguese Jews.; Wexler 2006, 1977, 1982, 1985, & 1987.

Jewish Languages within a Sociolinguistic Framework

In speaking of a so-called “Jewish Language” many readers will be most familiar with either Yiddish (Judeo-German) or Judeo-Spanish/Ladino. Since linguistic studies of Jewish groups began to emerge in the early 20th century¹⁰ (most of which focus on Yiddish), the list of Jewish languages has since been vastly expanded, from Judeo-Tajik to “Jewish English.”¹¹ It has since become clear that creating a rigid definition of what characterizes a Jewish Language, amounts, as Joshua Fishman writes, to be an “intellectually impoverishing,”¹² and, perhaps even a near impossible task.¹³ Many Jewish Languages are genetically and typologically unrelated, and furthermore, the emergence of a particular Jewish linguistic variety arises within very different sociological constraints, let alone disjointed contexts (as in the extreme case of a theoretical “Judeo-Portuguese”).

Still, Fishman tentatively defines a Jewish Language as:

“...any language that is phonologically, morpho-syntactically, lexico-semantically or orthographically different from that of non-Jewish sociocultural networks and that has some demonstrably unique function in the role-repertoire of a Jewish sociocultural network, which function is not normatively present in the role-repertoire of non-Jews and/or is not normative discharged via varieties identical with those utilized by non-Jews.”¹⁴

However, Fishman himself acknowledges that this definition is still quite vague, and leads to some difficult questions, such as: Is a Jewish language defined from the perspective of Jewish speakers or non-Jewish observers? What are the criteria for distinguishing a Jewish Language, aside from its straightforward association with a Jewish society? And do linguistic structural elements justifiably correlate to the particular segregation/integration of a Jewish group? The answers to these questions clearly cannot be universal, and would look very different, for

¹⁰ Cf. Weinreich 1980.

¹¹ Cf. Gold 1986; Brenor 2009.

¹² Fishman 1985, 7.

¹³ Hary 2009, Ch. 1 “The Jewish Linguistic Spectrum.”

¹⁴ Fishman 1985, 4.

example, if the questions were asked within a comparative analysis of Judeo-French and Judeo-Provençal, or within one between Yiddish and “Judaized Chinese.”¹⁵

Paul Wexler tries to outline a more detailed distinction between four types of Jewish Languages: A. Languages that are “linked through a chain of language shift back down to spoken Palestinian Hebrew” (such as Yiddish); B. Languages that “originate in the absence of any significant Jewish substratum” as a result of migrations or dialect shifts of the Jewish or non-Jewish population (such as in Baghdadi Judeo-Arabic); C. Languages developed for “certain forms of written expression, mainly Bible translations or exegesis” (such as language employed in Ladino calque translations); and D. Languages that are the same as those of co-territorial non-Jews, “but introduced occasional Hebrew-Aramaic or Jewish elements.” Wexler further adds that Jewish Languages are created by segregation, religious separatism, and migrations.¹⁶

The actual circumstances under which a Jewish Language comes to develop, however, is almost always more complex than Wexler’s typology suggests, and their mapping poses several difficulties.¹⁷ The Portuguese spoken in Luso-Sephardic networks offers a prime example: throughout the history of the *nação portuguesa*—whether still in Portugal or spread across the diaspora—all of the four types can potentially be identified individually, or in combination, depending on the time and place. To demonstrate, evidence suggests, that in Portugal Jewish speech was a subsection of a larger, non-Jewish sociolect (Wexler’s type D), while the variety of Portuguese that developed in Livorno was more influenced by exposure to Italian and its removal from the protolect in Portugal (type B).¹⁸

These sort of consideration are what make the language history and sociolinguistic contexts of the Portuguese Jews so essential to the conceptualization of Jewish Linguistics as a discipline. In reflecting on where one could historically place, what I will call, a Jewish variety of Portuguese, a novel perspective on Jewish Languages from Sarah Brenor,¹⁹ offers a more organic framework in which the linguistic and sociological frames of reference for the Luso-Sephardim can be joined. Brenor suggests, rather than claiming or rejecting the language of a Jewish community as a “Jewish Language” we should view each community as selectively

¹⁵ Cf. Leslie 1972; Wexler 1985 “Jewish Languages in Kaifeng, Henan Province, China.”

¹⁶ Wexler 2006 [1981], 6, 9-11.

¹⁷ Brenor 2007.

¹⁸ Cf. Wexler 2006 “De-Judaization and incipient re-Judaicization in 18th-century Portuguese Ladino [1987]” for evidence of Type C.

¹⁹ She also offered an in-depth list of possible factors leading to particular variety of a language in a Jewish group.

drawing from a distinctly “Jewish repertoire of linguistic elements” (varying from a few Hebrew words to a distinct grammar and lexicon). This model also alleviates us from having to make the trivial distinction between dialect and language, as the speech of a particular Jewish group is instead understood in terms of the community and its sociolinguistic components.²⁰ Accordingly, the majority of evidence put forth in this study will work towards a presentation of the “linguistic repertoire” found in representative Luso-Sephardic centers, and towards an examination of what this model might contribute to an historical and sociolinguistic analysis of the *nação portuguesa*.

Finally, the linguistic milieu in which varieties of Jewish Portuguese developed must also be factored into our understanding of the languages of the Luso-Sephardim. In nearly every community of the *nação* a varying degree of “Spanish” (Castilian/Judeo-Spanish/Ladino),²¹ Hebrew, and local linguistic influence came to affect and be affected by Portuguese settlers. While local languages are dealt with individually across the regions surveyed, Hebrew and “Spanish” elements seem to be universally incorporated—the first being a natural consequence of a Jewish affiliation or some kind, and the latter being demonstrative the Luso-Sephardim’s dynamic linguistic and religious identity. The particular employment of a “Spanish” linguistic repertoire in relation to Portuguese usage will also be discussed contextually for each region. From another perspective, while Portuguese functioned as a symbol of kinship and commerce, (Judeo-)Spanish was a language of culture and exalted *grandeza*, which represented the incorporation of the Portuguese Jews among the many nations of the Sephardim.²² (Judeo-)Spanish also held a practical importance as a language of Jewish re-education (after generations of New Christians removed from Judaism), and functioned as a *Kultursprache* in association with the apex of Iberian prestige in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Within the varying multilingual condition of the Luso-Sephardim, diglossia (or rather, multiglossia)²³ and bilingualism developed and diverged to a great extent. Charles Ferguson’s model of diglossia, distinguishing between a high (H) and a low (L) language prestige,²⁴ and

²⁰ Brenor 2008.

²¹ Differentiating between the three is outside the scope of this study. When required, the specific type of “Spanish” linguistic input is mentioned. When referring to standard usage among Jews and/or non-Jews, the term ‘Castilian’ is used.

²² Here referring to all Iberian Jewish exiles—Castilian, Andalusian, Galician, Catalanian, Portuguese, etc.

²³ Cf. Fishman 1985, Duranti 2004.

²⁴ Ferguson 1959.

Joshua Fishman's expansion of this model to contrast with bilingualism,²⁵ may be readily applied to the case of linguistic usage and function in the *nação portuguesa*. Varieties of Portuguese, (Judeo-)Spanish, and Hebrew all had a more or less set place across the culturally inter-connected circuits of the Portuguese Jewish exiles. Additionally, a state of bilingualism often existed in many communities, especially as assimilation took stronger hold in the 18th and 19th centuries. Members of the community came to maintain a variety of the Portuguese language, while also becoming fully native speakers in Italian, Dutch, Papiamentu etc.

This sociolinguistic condition of interaction between di/multiglossia and bilingualism, which Fishman calls, multilingualism, is characteristic of all diaspora settlements of the Luso-Sephardim at some point in time. Extending Fishman's model even further, a study of the sociolinguistic situation among Roman Jews of the early modern period (who make use, to a varying extent, of Italian, Hebrew, and Judeo-Roman) indicates the possibility of a "stunted bilingualism" among a multilingual group. In the case of Roman Jewry, Hebrew was often known imperfectly and shows a significant degree of Italian influence.²⁶ Likewise, among the Luso-Sephardim, imperfect knowledge of Portuguese, Castilian, Hebrew, and local languages could be found at various times, places, and extents, and so we must speak about each in relative terms. Among all of these considerations, we begin to see a spectrum of ethnolinguistic awareness in the *nação portuguesa*, which contributes overall to multiple emanations of linguistic, and ethnic Luso-Sephardic identity.

The Language Makeup of the Luso-Sephardim

The aim of this study is not to catalogue language usage in every location with an historical record of Jews of Portuguese origin. Rather, it compiles evidence on a regional basis from the most important centers of the Luso-Sephardim, and weaves such findings together to comment on the linguistic and sociological composition of the *nação portuguesa* as a whole. Given the degree of interconnectedness among the Luso-Sephardim, the somewhat arbitrary division

²⁵ Fishman 1967; "...bilingualism is acquired by exposure to, and the interaction with, a community that lives in accord with the norms of usage and is involved in the normal process of change to which most communities and most norms are exposed."; Fishman 1971, 3.

²⁶ Stow 2007, Ch. XVII.

between regions does not prevent a fluid delineation of this group's linguistic and cultural cohesion.

I will begin by first placing the Luso-Sephardim within a Portuguese socio-historical context prior to their expulsion and conversion, while offering evidence of what I consider to be a Portuguese sociolect that included the Jews as well as their coterritorialists (Chapter 1). Next I concentrate on the exile communities of Portuguese Jews in northwestern Europe, focusing especially on Amsterdam, Hamburg, and London, and showing how their religious and economic prominence affected linguistic usage and identity (Chapter 2). I then move east to the Mediterranean, tracing linguistic and cultural assimilation of the Luso-Sephardim in Ottoman and Italian territories (Chapter 3). Finally, I follow the *nação portuguesa* across the overseas territories of the Portuguese Empire and other European states, to see how a Jewish variety of Portuguese has come to affect the languages and creoles that are attested in each region today (Chapter 4).

Some methodological issues arise: First, the terms 'Jew,' 'New Christian,' and 'crypto-Jew' are sometimes used interchangeably by many scholars in discussing the Portuguese diaspora.²⁷ At what point, for example, is a crypto-Jewish society deemed "Jewish enough" to be drawing from a distinctly "Jewish linguistic repertoire?" Therefore, the majority of evidence gathered derives from communities that are clearly Jewish and, preferably, have established some sort of religious institutional setting. In cases where crypto-Jewish or New Christian communities must be considered, I justify using such supplementary evidence due to the high degree of correspondence between Portuguese exilic communities—Jewish or still New Christian.²⁸

Secondly, because Portuguese Jewish settlements are so widely spread, most linguistic analyses on the language of the Luso-Sephardim tend to focus on a single region or city. An examination conducted by Paul Wexler²⁹ does offer an overview of studies previously conducted. However, by nature of the topic, most references are not readily accessible, poorly organized, and full of typographical errors, and a majority of them are written in a variety of

²⁷ Silva 2011, 164.

²⁸ For example, there are remnants of correspondences between many Jews and crypto-Jews between Dutch and Portuguese Brazil between 1630-1654. Additionally, evidence of communication between the Portuguese Jewish community in Hormuz in modern Iran, and Mediterranean Sephardic communities has also been found; cf. Vainfas 2010, Fischel 1960, 1956.

²⁹ Wexler 2006, 1985 "Linguistica Judeo-Lusitanica."

languages other than English. Thus one minor goal of this study is to recast, reorganize, and translate the most important evidence pertaining to this topic, in order to make such information more available to English-language scholarship. Additionally, this study will expand upon Wexler's foundation by contributing evidence that has not been previously considered.

The more broad sociolinguistic and historical implications of language use and identity, however, will be the main contribution of this study. While also conducting a structural linguistic analysis, I set out to address why the Portuguese spoken by Jewish communities has been "judaized" to a minimal extent. What historically caused this trend, and how does the latter contribute to our understanding of the sociological factors affecting the *nação portuguesa* as a whole? More broadly, I will also use a sociolinguistic argument to show that the networks of the Luso-Sephardim do in fact represent a single entity, bound by ethnolinguistic awareness in direct association with maintained usage of the Portuguese language (in whichever form). A collective memory of past *grandeza* and persecution, as well as a kin-based economic system, depended on the unifying function of language in the Portuguese diaspora, and significantly worked to sociologically bridge the Iberian and Jewish elements that coexisted in exile. Moreover, it will be shown that by charting linguistic affiliation among Portuguese refugees, a typology of sorts for distinguishing Sephardic identity can be traced. For either the Judeo-Spanish or Portuguese speaking Jews, group affiliation functioned per economic opportunity, demonstrating, in part, that a Portuguese Jewish tradition is not a criterion alone for discussing the entity known as the Luso-Sephardim. In locations where trade operated within Portuguese circuits, commerce was naturally facilitated by varieties of the Portuguese language, and subsequently, a distinctively Jewish Portuguese community arose (permanently or temporarily). In communities where pre-existing Sephardic groups had established with their respective networks (usually operating in Castilian or Judeo-Spanish), we see a gradual cultural and linguistic assimilation of Portuguese Jews into the more broadly conceived Sephardic nation. Yet, in all cultural centers of the *nação portuguesa*, an immediate push can be observed to merge the Luso-Sephardic experience with that of the entire Sephardic diaspora, leading to the continued use of Hebrew, (Judeo-)Spanish/Ladino, and Portuguese. A study of where and how these linguistic puzzle pieces were made to fit together will ultimately contribute to our understanding of how language can serve as a map of Jewish identity in exile.

CH 1: THE VOICE OF THE NATION

Linguistic Identity in Iberia and Jewish Varieties of Peninsular Portuguese

My goal in this chapter will be to reassess the corpus of both non-Jewish and Jewish sources documenting usage of Portuguese among Jews prior to their expulsion from Portugal in 1496, in order to comment more broadly on the sociolinguistic status of Portuguese Jewry in this period.³⁰ I will begin by outlining the social and economic situation of Portuguese *judarias*, and how this framework might have motivated Jews' adoption of what I consider to be a Portuguese sociolect that is typical of the Portuguese interior (though not exclusive to Jews). After providing an examination of both non-Jewish and Jewish sources (in partial reliance on previous studies focusing on particular documents), I will suggest that the high degree of socio-economic integration of Portuguese Jews led to the continuation of Portuguese language usage in exile communities throughout the *nação portuguesa*. The utilization of Portuguese in the *nação*, I will claim in subsequent chapters, served both the purpose of providing it with a language of commerce, and of perpetuating a linguistic and cultural heritage.

Portuguese Jewry in Context

A Jewish presence in Iberia is hypothesized to have begun in the first and second centuries, following episodes of migration from Palestine into other provinces of the Roman Empire. Archaeological evidence of Jewish settlements can be found across Iberia as early as from third-century Toledo. Although a Jewish presence in the westernmost portions of the Peninsula may predate its earliest records, the latter begin in the mid-10th century in documents from Coimbra, then under the Christian kingdoms of Asturias, and later León.³¹ In central Lusitania, several

³⁰ In doing so, I am extremely indebted to the analytical framework proposed by Paul Wexler in *Linguística Judeo-Lusitanica* (1985). For non-Jewish depictions of Jewish speech in Portuguese literature (most notably in Gil Vicente) I will make wide use of Paul Teyssier's *Le langue de Gil Vicente* (1959). For "Jewish" examples of late Medieval Portuguese written in Hebrew script I will rely on Devon Strolovitch's *Old Portuguese in Hebrew Script: Convention, Contact, and Convivência* (2005).

³¹ Although Hebrew tomb site inscriptions have been found in Lagos (Algarve) dating from the 6th or 7th centuries. Recent evidence (2012) uncovered by the Friedrich Schiller University in Jena, found in Silves (Algarve) remains of a Jewish presence from as early as 390 AD (Graen 2012).

records from the 11th and 12th centuries attest to Jewish settlements in the region.³² The earliest evidence from Jewish sources is found in *responsa* surprisingly dated as late as the first half of the 13th century.³³ By the 15th century a Jewish presence could be seen throughout Portugal, from the north along the Minho River to the ports of the Algarve.

Most towns had a Jewish population in the tens to hundreds.³⁴ Based on records of the *sisão* tax,³⁵ Maria J. P. F. Tavares (1982) estimates a maximum of 30,000 Jews living in Portugal in 1496.³⁶ Demographically, the migration resulting from the Spanish expulsion of 1492 would double the Jewish population in Portugal, exacerbating the anti-Judaism that had been on the rise throughout the 15th century. Shortly after, persecution intensified, with D. Manuel I (1495-1521) expelling Portuguese Jewry in 1496, and later declaring a mass conversion of all Jews to Catholicism in 1497.

However, prior to the Spanish expulsion, Medieval Portuguese Jewry had experienced levels of social integration unprecedented for Europe at the time.³⁷ Legally, Jews were protected from forced conversion, a provision that was explicitly reiterated under D. João I (1385-1433), in accordance with a bull passed by Innocent III. Jews were given privileges to govern themselves, and were protected within broader Portuguese society by laws safeguarding synagogues, ensuring free worship, and prohibiting their murder. Such protection led many Iberian Jews residing outside of Portuguese borders (which were still relatively permeable during the 13th and 14th centuries) to migrate west, especially to border towns in the Beira and Alentejo regions.³⁸

³² Jews are first mentioned in 1177 in Lisbon (which by the 13th century became the center of Portuguese Jewry by the 13th century). Also, the construction of the first synagogue, by Joseph ibn Yahia, was during the reign of D. Sancho I (1189-1191): cf. Soyer 2007, 27-28; and Ray 2006, 37, 99.

³³ Ray 2006, 4.

³⁴ Such as Estremoz with twenty-five 'Jewish household' in 1462, Covilhã with one hundred and eight Jewish men in 1496, and Santarém with 400 households in 1496; *Chancelaria de D. Afonso V*, 9, fol. 29v; *Chancelaria de D. Manuel I*, 14, fol. 35v.

³⁵ A tax imposed on Portuguese Jews by D. Sancho IV of Castile and León, in 1295 - sometimes also known as *sis judenga* (Viterbo 1978, vol. 2, 325).

³⁶ Tavares 1982, vol. 1, 74; The overall Portuguese population was approximately one million, making Jews 3% of the total. This number appears not to include the recent influx of Spanish Jews in 1492. Another estimate by Azevedo (1975, 43) totals approximately 75,000 Portuguese Jews for the same period; Saraiva 2011, 8; cf. Kamen 1988 for general discussion of Iberian Jewish populations and migrations from the Peninsula.

³⁷ Although, generally speaking, the Iberian Jewish setting was relatively tolerant of a Jewish presence, Portugal remained more or less positive towards its Jewish community until the end of the 16th century, whereas such sentiment soured in the rest of the Peninsula after the 13th century; cf. Netanyahu 1995.

³⁸ Ray 2006, 30.

Organizationally, Jewish communities were divided into *comunas*³⁹ that served as administrative and judicial centers for each *judaria*,⁴⁰ or the area in which Jews were required to live in each town or city. Each *comuna* was led by what was called *arrabi-menor*, who served as the communal magistrate and judge in civil cases and crimes involving at least one Jew. He could also impose fines, imprisonment, corporal punishment, exile and excommunication. In some cases, he could even call upon royal officials to help arrest a delinquent community member. Additionally, each *comuna* was run by a *conselho*, or series of board members, that was entitled to make its own laws and ordinances under a system similar to that of Christian communities.⁴¹ Presiding across all Portuguese *comunas* was the chief Rabbi of Portugal, or *arrabi-mor*. This official was appointed directly by the king of Portugal, and could use the king's royal seal, similar to a Christian magistrate.⁴²

Nonetheless, the autonomy granted to the Jewish community came with a price: as non-citizens, Jews were expected to pay extra taxes, and by 1340 D. Afonso IV initiated a service tax on every Jewish person. Jews were required to inventory all taxable properties, including chattels, real estate, oil, gold, silver, copper, iron, foodstuffs, and livestock. Additionally, every married or widowed Jew was required to pay a capitation tax of 20 *soldos*. A *portagem* tax was also charged on all goods imported into towns, applicable to non-*vizinho*, or non-citizens (including Jewish and Muslim residents).⁴³ Tax on Jews was so lucrative that upon their expulsion in 1497 D. Manuel I was obligated to compensate the *fidalgos*, who would regularly receive a portion of Jewish tax revenues, over five million *reais* for their losses.⁴⁴ Looking further into the chronicles of the first Portuguese kings, it is quite apparent that the toleration of Jews was fiscally motivated and was intended first and foremost to benefit the crown.

Jews were also given ample commercial opportunities, in order to generate further taxes. Both within Portugal and overseas, Jews were involved from the earliest stages of Portuguese expansion, beginning with D. Fernando I and Portugal's first major investments in its sea born

³⁹ Muslim *comunas* functioned similarly but were mostly restricted to the south.

⁴⁰ Sometimes also spelled *judaria*.

⁴¹ *Ordenações Afonsinas*, II, title 81, 92.

⁴² In 1463 D. Afonso V abolished the title of *arrabi-mor* (according to Tavares, due to internal feuding between Portuguese Jewish elite), dividing its powers into two positions, *corregador do corte* (court magistrate), and *contador* (auditor) usually given to Jews, and therefore maintaining a *de facto* chief rabbinate; In 1412 João I modified this privilege to the use of the 'seal of the chief rabbi of Portugal'; Soyer 2007, 34-36.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 47-52.

⁴⁴ Tavares 1982, vol. 1, 167; vol. 2, table 7 & 7a.

empire. By the reign of D. João II, petitions were sent to Ferdinand and Isabella for protection of Portuguese Jews trading in Spain, especially along the Mediterranean coast.⁴⁵ The Jews involved in trade typically were from elite families and invested greatly in the sugar exchange between the Madeira Islands and the import of textiles from Castile, Flanders, and England.⁴⁶ The success of some individual Jewish merchants was so extensive that when D. Afonso V in 1478-1480 called for funds to raise Portuguese defenses, one fifth of all lenders were Jews.⁴⁷ This levy was essentially involuntary and determined proportionately to the wealth of each *comuna*, which suggests that the aggregate of Portugal's Jewish communities controlled at least 20% of immoveable property (although this was concentrated in the hands of a few individuals).⁴⁸ Consequently, it was in the best interest of Iberian monarchs to keep *comunas* content, as they pursued rights over Jewish taxes (on individuals, goods, and land) and in exchange for royal protection.⁴⁹ Indeed, as early as 1210, a royal decree by D. Afonso II refers to Portuguese Jews (and Muslims) patronizingly as “mauri aut judei mei,”⁵⁰ in reference to the tax revenue generated.

Additionally, due to the aftermath of the Black Plague which devastated approximately one third of Portugal's population (1348-1349), Portugal faced a labor shortage partially filled by Jews, who represented a more mobile workforce.⁵¹ Jews were involved in professions varying from farming, craftsmanship, commerce, moneylending, and tax farming.⁵² Jews were also renowned as master blacksmiths (Jewish blacksmiths are even mentioned by Gil Vicente in the *Farsa de Inês Pereira*), and were favored by the crown for their expertise in weapon production.⁵³ Jewish craftsmen were even at times solicited, such as in the town of Mourão that

⁴⁵ Tavares 1982, 75.

⁴⁶ Not surprisingly, these industries would come to characterize the Portuguese Jewish diaspora and geographically determined the new centers of Portuguese Jewry.

⁴⁷ Freire 1906, 425-428; Tavares 1982, vol. 1, 176-182; Guedelha Palaçano and Isaac Abravanel contributing 1,947,415 and 1,680,000 *reais*, respectively (well above an other lender, Jewish or non-Jewish).

⁴⁸ Saraiva 2001, 3; Freire 1906, 425; Azevedo 1922, 45; Note: that the Disney (2009, 153) citation mistranslates *imóvel* (immoveable) as ‘moveable’ from the original Saraiva Portuguese edition, *Inquisição e cristãos-novos*, 1969, 29. “Este documento, interessante sob varios aspectos, será adiante transcrito. Por elle se verá haver Pero Estaço recebido ao todo vinte e quatro milhões quinhentos e tantos mil reaes, sendo dez milhões por conta dos sessenta milhões do serviço outorgado, doze milhões de empréstimos, de varios particulares, um conto seiscentos e tantos mil reaes dos pedidos pagos pelas comunas dos Judeus e Moiros, e o resto de miudos.”

⁴⁹ Ray 2006, 89.

⁵⁰ Ventura 2006, 288.

⁵¹ Disney 2009, 108-109.

⁵² Between 1383 and 1450, tailors, weavers, and shoemakers were the most common Jewish professions in census data from Lisbon, Évora, Santarém, Porto, Lamego, Guarda, Leira, and Faro (Tavares 1982, vol. 1, 303-305).

⁵³ Saraiva 2001, 4.

petitioned D. João II in 1455 to allow Jewish settlement in order to revitalize the local economy.⁵⁴ Medicine was also particular to Jewish professionalism, with sixty percent of medical licenses in the 15th century held by Jews (partially explained by Jewish knowledge of Islamic science after the *Reconquista*).⁵⁵ Among the technical crafts that made up medieval society, it seems Jews were overrepresented in Portugal.

Jews were also involved in moneylending and tax farming, even though they represented but a small fraction of total operations. Despite a law promulgated in 1340 prohibiting Jews from practicing usury, this restriction was mostly overlooked, and in some cases contradicted.⁵⁶ However, moneylending was seldom a primary occupation, and was restricted to only the wealthiest Jews, many of whom earned their riches through trade, artistry, or medicine. Tax farming was similarly limited to a small class of Jews, and was concentrated in rural areas where mobile merchants (Jews and Christian) could be contracted by the crown, but was prohibited after the reign of D. Duarte I (1433).⁵⁷

At a social level, the toleration of Jewish communities appears somewhat less accommodating. Jews were forced to live within *judarias* starting with D. Pedro I (1357-1376), requiring that any town's population of ten or more Jews be restricted to such neighborhoods. In many *judarias* a wall surrounded the area, and a curfew was enforced by fine (or flogging upon second offense).⁵⁸ As clear racial demarcation, miscegenation between Jews and Christians, especially involving a Christian woman, were punished with death, and Christian women were forbidden from entering a *judaria* unaccompanied by Christian men.⁵⁹ Furthermore, after objections from Pope Clement IV that the Portuguese Jews had an inordinate number of rights, D. Afonso IV (1325-1357) instituted a yellow symbol to be worn on the clothing by all Jews.⁶⁰ In the most severe cases, scattered instances of violence occurred against the Jews, most of which were pacified by royal intervention.⁶¹

⁵⁴ Soyer 2007, 73-74.

⁵⁵ Gonçalves 1988, 9-53.

⁵⁶ Soyer 2007, 62.

⁵⁷ *Ordenações Afonsinas* II, title 68; *Que os Judeos nom arrendem Igrejas, nem Moesteiros, nem as rendas delles*.

⁵⁸ Marques 1982, 52.

⁵⁹ Soyer 2007, 60.

⁶⁰ Later changed to a red badge under D. Pedro I (1357-1367); Vasconcellos 1933, vol. 4, 88. Vasconcellos 1933, vol. 4, 88.

⁶¹ Tavares 1984; Examples include: 1378 (when the Leira community sought royal protection from assaults), 1383 (which prevented an attack on the Lisboetan Jews related to the Revolution of 1383-1385), and 1449 (when Lisboetan Jews were killed in a riot, but with the principal organizers later punished by king). This is also not to

Despite the still uncomfortable situation for most Portuguese Jews, most notable from popular anti-Judaism, including instances of violence, is the degree of royal concern for Jews – both in maintaining a careful level of separation and in insuring the safety of the *judarias*. While there had always been various levels of anti-Jewish sentiment (mainly agitated by the Dominican Order), royal policy appears to have granted Jews a generous position until the reign of D. João II (1481-1495), especially in comparison to the rest of Christian Europe at the time.⁶² But rather than attribute royal policy to generosity, it seems the retention of Portugal's Jews was more representative of the monarchs' interest in generating income through taxation and trade. The Jews were thus included in the Portuguese state as pawns of the royal coffers, by being excluded from citizenship (and so required to pay extra taxes) while being at the same time provided autonomy, vis-à-vis liberal social regulations and relatively accessible commercial networks. Perhaps the best illustration of royal motives is exemplified in laws related to Jewish real estate: Jews were prohibited from selling land to foreigners and to non-Jews (except in the case of a special royal permission) as in both cases this would have changed the tax status for the plot, thus diminishing revenues for the crown (D. Dinis I (1279-1325) clearly proclaims that his sovereignty concerned “também os corpos como os avores deles.”).⁶³ Therefore, the financial preoccupations of the monarchy played a large role in Portuguese Jewry's experience of what was perhaps the lightest dosage of prejudice against Jews among medieval kingdoms. What might resemble social favor on the part of the crown is better characterized as a self-interested, precarious leniency. And indeed, with the rise of D. Manuel I (1495-1521), and his aspirations to unify the Iberian crowns, the Jewish presence in Portugal soon had to succumb to the monarchy's new course.⁶⁴

mention the violence that was to be committed against conversos (such as the Lisbon Massacre in 1506) after the General Conversion in 1497.

⁶² In 1493 D. João II ordered 2000 Jewish children to be sent to the newly discovered islands of São Tomé. By 1506, six hundred children remained alive, many of who became the ancestors of today's mulatto population (Saraiva 2001, 210).

⁶³ “...their bodies as well as their possessions.”; *Chancelaria de D. Dinis I*, vol. 3, fol. 104.

⁶⁴ The expulsion and subsequent conversion of all Portuguese Jews occurred within the first two years of D. Manuel's reign.

Finding a voice in Portugal

Emerging from the almost two hundred and fifty years of integration was a developed and distinctive variety of Sephardic tradition, identifiably both Jewish and Portuguese. Furthermore, in terms of language there appears to persist a multiglossia⁶⁵ between Hebrew, Portuguese, and Castilian. While Castilian will be discussed more in the context of Portuguese exile communities, in Iberia one already sees the “exalted status” of the Castilian language both in Portuguese literature as well as hybridized within sources of Jewish Portuguese language.⁶⁶

The extent of Hebrew usage is unclear, although in 1542 the Portuguese Inquisition seized Hebrew documents, including a marriage *ketuba* and a will written in 1484 and 1490, respectively. From such documents it can be ascertained that the Hebrew language still held a cultural significance for Jewish communities at least in religious or other documents related to Jewish life. Sources from the 15th century also show that Jews would often sign their names using Hebrew characters, perhaps setting a trend for transcribing Portuguese in Hebrew script (whose corpus will be analyzed below).⁶⁷ However, it seems very unlikely that Hebrew continued as a spoken language, given the dual pressure and incentive for Jews to assimilate linguistically. D. João I (1385-1433) and D. Afonso V's (1438-1477) prohibition of Hebrew script in official documents, which made it punishable by death, serves as the most extreme example.⁶⁸ However, Soyer (2007) argues that such laws should not be viewed as “forced acculturation,” but rather as a push for conformity in government documentation. From a wider sociolinguistic perspective, it seems that there was strong incentive for Portuguese Jews to speak the language of their Christian compatriots, as it facilitated their integration and protection while it also served them professionally, especially in commerce.

Coming now to the linguistic situation of Portuguese in Jewish communities still in Portugal, I will focus on the 13th-15th centuries, a formative period for the Portuguese nation, which by 1249-1250 had completed its *Reconquista* in Iberia. Portuguese was a defining marker in the construction of Portugal's identity even before its constitution as an independent kingdom. In the

⁶⁵ Cf. Duranti 2004, 54; cf. Miller 2000.

⁶⁶ Even in royal documents, Portuguese monarchs are referred to as *El Rey*, as early as 1340 according to Houaiss (2001).

⁶⁷ Castilian-language texts can be found written in Hebrew script dating from the 11th century (Wexler 2006, 438); *Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Inquisição da Lisboa, processo* no. 4532, no. 12385. *cit.* in Soyer 2007, 78.

⁶⁸ *Ordenações Afonsinas*, II, 93.

9th-13th century (also known as the proto-historic stage) a Galician-Portuguese language developed in northwestern Iberia. After the linguistic evolution of the so-called Old Portuguese period (preserved most clearly in documents from the 14th to 16th centuries), in the mid 16th century (historic prose period, also known as *português comum*) a distinct Classical Portuguese language is seen emerge and last into the 18th century.⁶⁹ As early as the reign of D. Dinis I (1279-1325), Portuguese was made the exclusive language of secular government, with Latin remaining as the language of the Church.⁷⁰

It was under the rule of the House of Bergonha that the majority of Jews formerly under Muslim rule adapted to the Portuguese language, as it facilitated assimilation into Christian Portuguese society.⁷¹ Despite this sociolinguistic integration, the corpus of texts reflecting language usage amongst Portuguese Jews in the late Middle Ages is very limited. Non-Jewish sources consist of a few poetical compositions and theatrical works, most famously by dramatist Gil Vicente (1465-1535).⁷² Jewish sources are only comprised of seven extant Medieval Portuguese texts written in Hebrew characters.⁷³ The paucity of sources makes it especially difficult to establish the existence of a distinct Jewish Portuguese language for this period. The linguistic situation of the highly integrated Jewish communities in late medieval Portugal can be better explained by avoiding the notion of a distinct Jewish language. Most instances of variation either conform to those seen in unrelated contemporary manuscripts or are artificial hyperboles intended to portray Jews. The sociolinguistic factors involved in each of these sources need to be discussed in relation to the relatively high levels of inclusion experienced by the Medieval Portuguese Jewish community.

Non-Jewish Sources

In examining non-Jewish sources of Jewish Portuguese varieties in the Middle Ages, one is mostly limited to theatrical works such as *autos* or *farsas*, which emerged in the 12th century in Portuguese, but were also part of an older Iberian literary tradition. Such works are

⁶⁹ Modern Portuguese develops after the 18th century; Azevedo 2005, 176-185; cf. Haug 2008, 35; and Neto 1970, 405.

⁷⁰ Disney 2009, 95.

⁷¹ For example: Jews were royal treasurers to each monarch during the first dynasty (1140-1383) (Saraiva 2001, 3).

⁷² Cf. Wexler (1985) "Non-Jewish Sources"

predominantly satirical, and due to royal patronage, they most often interpreted state policy rather than provide critical commentary.⁷⁴ Many *autos* and *farsas* also contain “foreign” characters, such as Romani, Moors, Jews, and African Slaves, who are portrayed as speaking with an idiosyncratic pronunciation and a distinctive jargon. In one of the earliest examples of Iberian literature, *El cantar de mio Cid* (12th century), written in old Castilian, Jews are at best singled out as an alien group amongst other Iberian groups. Specifically Portuguese-language portrayals of Jews and Jewish speech, however, begin with the works compiled in the *Cancioneiro geral*, published in 1516, but composed of various works from the late medieval period. This section will focus on the speech performed by Jewish or New Christian characters in the plays of Gil Vicente and other authors, by whom he was variously influenced.

The *Cancioneiro Geral*

The tendency to characterize Jewish and New Christians as speaking in a particular jargon, varying from Hebraisms to atypical pronunciation, is embodied most representatively in the five-volume *Cancioneiro geral*. This work, published in 1516 by Garcia de Resende (1470-1536), serves as the first compilation of Portuguese poetic works from the 15th and 16th centuries, comprised of nearly one thousand poetic works from 286 authors, 150 of whom wrote exclusively in Castilian, and the remainder being in Portuguese. The *Cancioneiro geral* shows a trend for linking identity to speech in the depiction of Jews and other “foreign” characters. Instances of Jewish speech appear to have been part of a larger Iberian literary heritage, which had an already set paradigm for the characterization of Portuguese Jews.

One of the works published in the *Cancioneiro geral*, Anrique da Mota’s *Farsa do Alfaiate*,⁷⁵ integrates some of the most typical markers of Jewish speech as depicted in Portuguese literature. The character of the New Christian Manuel is meant to represent Jews’ excessive love for money and fearlessness of God. Scholars such as Teyssier have suggested that, because of Manuel’s New Christian identity, both his pronunciation and his lexicon were intended to appear

⁷³ The scarcity of documents is possibly a result also of 15th-century Jewish book burnings, and later Inquisitorial book burnings.

⁷⁴ Or at least such works reiterated what court policy dictated.

⁷⁵ Title given in 1924 by Leite de Vasconcellos (Vasconcellos 1924).

Jewish.⁷⁶ Italicized in the excerpt below are typical phonetic and lexical markers employed in the portrayal of Portuguese Jewish speech in the Middle Ages. Note the use of diphthong *oi/y* over the more standard *ou*, as well as the inclusion of Hebrew exclamations:

Se o calo, abafarey.
Jur'em Deu, nam calarey
 Porque ness'ora ssam morto!
 ...
Goayas, que sam destroçado!
 Ay, *Adonay*, que farey?
 Pois que quys o meu pecado
 Que perdy o meu cruzado
 Que por maas noytes guaney.
Goay de mim, onde m'irey
 Que rreçeba algum conforto?
 ...
 Mas yr-m'ey por essa terra
 Como homem ssem ventura,
 Porqu'a dor que me deterra
 Me fará tam crua guerra
 Que *moyra* ssem sepultura.
Guyseraa, que gram tristura!
 ...
 O quem me desse ssaber
 Onde um *toyro* estivesse:
 Hy-lo-hia cometer.
 ...
 Mas porém espantar-ss'am
 Os que ssouberem tal *lodo*.⁷⁷

Teyssier highlights various Jewish elements from the text: The most numerous examples are of replacements of *ou* with *oi/y*,⁷⁸ in such words as *moyra* and *toyro* (Modern Portuguese 'moura'–Moor; 'touro'–bull).⁷⁹ The interchange of the diphthongs *oi/y* and *ou* is also common to non-Jewish speech, but is typically used by medieval poets to characterize Jews (and will be discussed in detail below). In addition, one can see the use of the exclamation *goay* (used variably as *goayas*), equivalent to Portuguese *ai*, as well as of the word *lodo* ('mud' in Modern Portuguese—here used to indicate misfortune), terms characteristically employed when portraying Jews. Two Hebraisms are also present, *adonay* (used by Jews to refer to God), and *guyseraa*,

⁷⁶ Teyssier 1959, Ch. iv.

⁷⁷ *Cancioneiro Geral de Garcia de Resende*, ed. A. J. Gonçalves Guimarães, 5 vol., Coimbra, 1910-1917, pg. 202-203; adapted from Teyssier (1951, 203-204).

⁷⁸ The diphthong *ou* is derived from Latin *au* or *al*, or a preceding *u* as a separate syllable (ex.: *tauru* > *touro*, *audire* > *ouvir*, *alteru-* > *outro*), and *oi* is derived from *oct*, or *o* preceding *i* in another syllable (ex.: *octo* > *oito*, *nocte* > *noite*).

⁷⁹ Teyssier 1959, 201-205.

most likely from the Hebrew גזרה (*gezera*—prohibition, restrictive fate).⁸⁰ Dramatist Pero da Sousa Ribeiro writes in another *Cancioneiro geral* text: “*Chamam os judeus ‘Adonay’; As judias dizem ‘goay!’*”⁸¹

Apart from clear lexical and phonetic markers, non-idiomatic expressions seem to also correlate to Jewish speech. The title *dom*, most often used to refer to royalty or high nobility in standard speech, is spoken by Jews in the *Cancioneiro geral*, as in: “*E por ysso, dom Abraão, nem judeu nem bom cristão...*”.⁸² Additionally, in the text from da Mota excerpted above, Manuel utters the words *jur’em Deu*, where the typical Portuguese *Deus* is elided, in accordance with Judaism’s strict monotheism, as result of a misconstrual of -s as a plural marker.

These instances of portrayal of Jewish and New Christian speech are representative of a literary trend, of which Gil Vicente’s depiction of Jewish speech, analyzed in the following section, was also partaking.⁸³

The Works of Gil Vicente

The life of Portugal’s most famed poet and dramatist, Gil Vicente (1435-1535), spanned from the Great Conversion of Portugal’s Jews in 1497 nearly to the official inception of the Portuguese Inquisition in 1536. Perhaps no Portuguese dramatist better captures the late medieval period in Portugal, especially in relation to the social position of “foreign peoples” and the xenophobia engendered by the Great Expulsion of Spanish Jews in 1492.

The earliest evidence of Gil Vicente, previous to his rise to court playwright, suggests he was born in rural northern Portugal into a humble aristocratic family of craftsmen. In 1495 there is evidence that he was a goldsmith for the crown, and by 1516 he had already contributed some *vilancetes* and *cantigas* to Resende’s *Cancioneiro Geral*. Vicente became the royal dramatist under D. João II (1481-1495), D. Manuel I (1495-1521), and D. João III (1521-1557). Unfortunately no autograph manuscripts of Vicente’s works exists, although several copies from

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 204.

⁸¹ “Jews say ‘*Adonay*’; Jewish women say ‘*goay!*’” (*Cancioneiro Geral*, vol. IV, pg. 259, v. 20-21).

⁸² From another work by Anrique da Mota (*Cancioneiro Geral*, vol. IV, pg. 388, v. 4-5).

⁸³ Teyssier 1959, 205.

the 16th century with revisions from his children can still be found in the definitive *Copilaçam de todas as obras de Gil Vicente* (1562).⁸⁴

Vicente's genius lies with the linguistic playfulness he displays in dialogues depicting various registers and modes of speech from throughout Iberia.⁸⁵ He is credited with having written forty-seven plays and dramatic monologues, fifteen in Portuguese, twelve in Castilian, and the remaining twenty in a mixture of the two languages. Of this total, characters perceived as foreign (with their distinctive speech) appear twelve times: Africans appear in four works, Romani in two, and Moors in one.⁸⁶ A total of five works cast Jews:⁸⁷ *Barca do Inferno* (1517), *Farsa de Inês Pereira* (1523), *Juiz da Beira* (written in Castilian-1526/26?), *Diálogo sobre a Ressurreição* (1526/27/28?), and *Auto da Lusitânia* (1532).⁸⁸

The tendency to typify the ethnic identity of a character by means of a particular kind of speech was widespread in the late medieval and early modern period: the works of Shakespeare, Jonson, and Molière testify to it.⁸⁹ Also Iberian playwrights other than Vicente utilized this technique: as Parkinson remarks, "comic mileage was gained by foreign characters speaking their representative languages."⁹⁰ Vicente's earliest works show reliance upon the Salamancan dramaturgists Juan del Encina and Lucas Fernández in the characterization of rustic speech by means of *Sayagués* (literary Leonese).⁹¹ Since plays were predominantly performed before Portuguese rulers, it seems quite natural that a speech typology reflective of the rigid social stratification those rulers embodied emerged as a typical feature of Iberian Medieval drama.⁹²

The Jews, who are often the object of Vicente's aversion, find their place in the linguistic typology mentioned above.⁹³ Hebraisms are the first linguistic marker to stand out in their

⁸⁴ Parkinson 2009, 52-58.

⁸⁵ Saraiva 1942, 67-69.

⁸⁶ Africans: *Frágoa d'Amor*, *Nao d'Amor*, *Clérigo de Beira*, *Floresta d'Enganos*; Romani: *Auto da Festa*, *Auto da Lusitânia*; Moors: *Cortes de Júpiter* (Teyssier 1959).

⁸⁷ New Christians are also depicted with similar Jewish speech in *Romagem de Agravados* and *Trovas a Afonso López Çapaio* (Teyssier 1959, 223).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 199.

⁸⁹ Burke 2004, 38.

⁹⁰ Parkinson 2009, 60.

⁹¹ Hart 1961; Stern 1961.

⁹² As in the works of Anrique da Mota and others discussed above, the words *guai*, *guaia*, *guaiado*, *lodo*, *enlodar*, *chanto* (*llanto*, Castilian), appear in Jewish speech, in both Portuguese and Castilian Vicentine works. These terms are not restricted to Jews either, although they occur more frequently with Jewish characters (Teyssier 1959, 219).

⁹³ Jews in Vicentine works are typically portrayed as villains: moneylenders, heretics, outcasts, or other medieval stereotypes. An exception can be found in *Auto da Lusitânia*, in which a Jewish family invites a homeless Catholic into their home (Muniz 2000). Vicente's acculturated antisemitism may also help explain his often unflattering depiction of Jewish characters. It is important to remember his obligation to reiterate state policy under royal

parlance. Thus, for example, in scene two of the play *Farsa de Inês Pereira*, a satire of middle-class life in 16th-century Portugal, Vidal and Latão, two *judeus casamenteiros* (Jewish matchmakers), pronounce a blessing for the marriage between Inês and Bras de Mata. In order to reflect speech among Jews, Vicente employs a fusion between the Portuguese and Hebrew languages:

Alça *manim* dona, ó dona, ha,
 Arrea *espeçulá*,
 Bento o Deu de Jacob,
 Bento o Deu que a Pharaó
 Espantou e espantará.
 ...
 Bento o Deu de Abraham,
 Benta a terra de Canaam.
 Pera bem sejaís casados.
 Dae-nos ca senhos ducados⁹⁴

George T. Artola and William Eichengreen provide a detailed analysis of this passage, singling out the words *manim* and *espeçulá* as the most notable Jewish features of the text.⁹⁵ *Manim* is a clear Hebraism, in that it resembles the Castilian *mano* (Portuguese *mão*), ‘hand’, but with the addition of the Hebrew masculine plural ending -im. The other word, *espeçulá*, appears to be a modification of *espessura* (thickness—probably in reference to the bride’s hair) that demonstrates a l-r spelling confusion otherwise documented in Jewish and non-Jewish Iberian languages alike.⁹⁶ Since the Jewish connotation of *espeçulá* is very likely, there is a good chance that the accentuation of the final syllable should be read as a Hebraism, mimicking the tonic pattern of Hebrew words ending with a vowel.⁹⁷

Teyssier, however, notes that the custom of raising one’s hands at a wedding is attested in a non-Jewish context in António Ribeiro Chiado’s *Auto das Regateiras*, in which a parallel formula is employed: “*Alçay as mãos, dai-lhe graças! Filhos, sejaís bem logrados!*”⁹⁸ This shows Vicente playfully utilizing supposed elements of Jewish speech in conjunction with

patronage, especially as theatrical works were performed exclusively on royal premises (as no theatres yet existed in late Medieval Portugal). As shown by Márcio Ricardo Coelho Muniz in direct correspondences with D. João III, Vicente’s opinion on Portugal’s Jews and New Christians parallels royal decree – from urging toleration in 1506, to accusing them of heresy in 1531 (Cf. Muniz 2000).

⁹⁴ *Obras de Gil Vicente*, ed. Mendes dos Remédios, Coimbra, 1912, ii, 336.

⁹⁵ Cf. Artola and Eichengreen 1948.

⁹⁶ Cf. Benichou, P., *Romances judeo-espanholes de Marruecos*, *Revista de Filología Hispánica*, (1945), 216.

⁹⁷ Artola & Eichengreen 1948.

dramaturgic topoi. This degree of authorial freedom needs to be taken in consideration when assessing the accuracy of Vicente's portrayal of Jewish speech.

A further example of Hebraized Portuguese dialogue in Vicente's works is provided by usage of a Latinized version of the Hebrew word הצרה (*ha-tzara* - trouble, woe) in *Barca do Inferno* and *Diálogo sobre a Ressurreição*, pointed out by Révah.⁹⁹ In the former, a Jew who is admitted to neither heaven nor hell¹⁰⁰ exclaims before the Devil: "*Hazará, pedra miuda, lodo, chanto, fogo, lenha!*"¹⁰¹ The other instance can be found in the *Diálogo sobre a Ressurreição*, in which a rabbi named Samuel addresses another Jew: "*Que falas? Que falas? Azará, te veo?*"¹⁰²

These Hebraisms, though few, are still quite meaningful. Since Vicente was likely ignorant of Hebrew, and such instances are not attested elsewhere in the Portuguese literary tradition (though admittedly, other Portuguese authors were not as invested in depicting the Jews), we are left to imagine that these forms may have entered the dramatist's work by direct contact with Jews. It is difficult to tell, however, whether they were simply meant to mimic phonetically different words that Vicente might have heard (e.g. plural masculine Hebrew words ending in –im), or they reproduced distinct words utilized by Portuguese Jews (definitely an unlikelihood at least in the case of the accentuation of the last syllable in *espeçulá*). The attestation of the usage of the Hebrew suffix –im to pluralize non-Hebrew nouns in Judeo-Spanish texts (in which words such as *ermanim*, brothers, and *ladronim*, thieves, are found) might tip the scale slightly in the second direction.¹⁰³ The extent to which the examples from Vicente's works listed above may be used to comment more broadly on a distinct Jewish Portuguese ethnolect, however, remains dubious.

Our doubts are made greater if we consider that Vicente, as a medieval dramaturgist, would normally cast characters (e.g. butchers, tailors, blacksmiths, Moors, Jews) through the peculiarities of their speech. Although he may have stayed true to the sources he depicted, he was certainly greatly invested in stereotyping, but did not always achieve a matching level of

⁹⁸ "Raise your hands, give thanks! Children, may you be blessed" (cf. Teyssier 1959, 217). Compare to the "Jewish" "*Alça manim dona...*"

⁹⁹ Cf. Révah 1951, 175.

¹⁰⁰ On Vicente's antisemitism, cf. Lafer 1978.

¹⁰¹ "Warning, rubble, dirt, tears, firewood!" *Barca do Inferno* Madrid.

¹⁰² "What are you saying? What are you saying? Be warned, I tell you!" *Diálogo sobre a Ressurreição* 29

¹⁰³ Cf. Reváh 1955; and Luria, Max A. *A Study of the Monastir Dialect of Judeo-Spanish*, New York, 1930, p. 137.

accuracy. For example, Vicente employs Castilian¹⁰⁴ when adapting plays to *novelas de caballerías* (such as in *Amadís de Gaula* and *Don Duardos*), *Sayagués* in pastoral depictions (such as *Auto do Reis Magos*, *Auto pastoral castelhano*, *Auto de quarto tempos*, etc.), and even attempts to include Hebrew and Arabic in the plays mentioned above. However, Portuguese often crept into his Castilian, and Portuguese lexicon, structure, and synthesized etymologies are observed throughout his Castilian and bilingual works.¹⁰⁵

If Hebraisms in Vicente's representation of Jewish speech do not clearly point to the existence of a Jewish Portuguese ethnolect, the alleged non-Hebraic morphological, lexical, and phonetic markers of Jewish speech point even less in this direction. To begin with, several of these markers can be found within Vicente's works also in non-Jewish Portuguese dialogue (although to a lesser degree). For example, Jews in Vicente are often depicted confusing the diphthongs *ou* and *oi* (or its variant *oy*), and even the same character is shown pronouncing the same word in both forms. This can be witnessed in words such as *oiro* ('ouro'-gold), *toiro* ('touro'-bull), *poipar* ('poupar'-to save), *hoivar* ('haver'-to have), *oitro* ('outro'-other), *oivir* ('ouvir'-to hear), *repoisar* ('repousar'-to rest), *coisa* ('cousa[†]'-thing), *moiro* ('mouro'-Moor) etc.¹⁰⁶ While this confusion is often pointed out as a classic marker of Jewish speech in late Medieval Portuguese,¹⁰⁷ it appears that it was neither restricted to Jews nor consistently attested among them. Looking deeper into the phonetic development of Medieval Portuguese, it becomes clear that *oi-ou* alternation is quite typical on a broader, Portugal-wide scale. There is much debate as to whether the usage of *oi* represents a colloquial form,¹⁰⁸ and to what extent *ou* represents a more learned form.¹⁰⁹ In addition, Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcellos argues that *oi-ou* alteration is consistent with the earliest manuscripts of medieval dialects, and that speech from Beira (a region with several historic Jewish communities) more often used the *oi* form—

¹⁰⁴ Vicente also uses Castilian for "exalted subjects" or to depict important subject, demonstrating an Iberian paradigm that would extend to Jewish Portuguese diaspora communities, especially in Amsterdam (Hart 1961).

¹⁰⁵ There is a plethora of examples from Vicente's Castilian usage that demonstrate his imperfect knowledge of the language that is highly influenced by Portuguese. Such examples that include: *preguntar-pergunatar* (which occurs in the ratio 23:10) [351], *aperceber-apreceber* (4:3) [352], *plata-prata* (358), *plado'-prado* (358), *'huego'-fuego* (370), *'fierros'-hierros* (370), *'galina'-gallina* (369), *'otono'-otoño* (370). Note that words with apostrophes indicate words that were created, presumably, based on pseudo-etymologies enlisted by Vicente; adapted from Teyssier 1961.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *Barca do Inferno* (571), *Diálogo da Ressurreição* (57, 58, 77, 82, 97, 120, 160, 167, 179, 180, 230, 275, 299, 314, 315), *Auto da Lusitânia* (45, 221, 239) (all cit. in Teyssier 1959, 211).

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Blondheim 1925, lxxxvii.

¹⁰⁸ Williams 1928, 85-86.

¹⁰⁹ Rolin 1910, 389.

precisely where Teyssier locates Vicente's dialectology.¹¹⁰ Additionally, Joseph Dunn comments that *ou* represents a more literary form, which follows the pattern seen in court documents from this period.¹¹¹ Noteworthy are excerpts found in two letters of D. João III: *couraças/coyraças* ('breastplates'-both forms found in the same document) and *coisa* ('cousa'[†]), which neatly embody the prevalence of *oi-ou* alternation from all circles of Portuguese society.¹¹²

As far as morphology is concerned in Vicente's works, non-standard conjugations occurring in Jewish speech are also found in non-Jewish rustic parlance, for example: 'fazer' (*fago, faga, fairey, figeste*), 'trazer' (*trager*), 'ouvir' (*oyvo, oyvamos*), and 'poder' (*podo*).¹¹³ Concerning lexicon, peculiar words included in Jewish dialogue are also utilized by non-Jewish characters as either rustic forms, e.g. *samica* (weak, effeminate), or archaisms whose preservation is typical of rustic speech, e.g. *atá, atés* ('até'-until) or *entances* ('então'-therefore).¹¹⁴ As Paul Teyssier argues, Vicente, in order to portray the speech of the Jewish populace (*lavradores, pastores, and ratinhos*), utilized a "stylized" rustic dialect from Beira, a region of central Portugal where there was a great concentration of *juderias*.¹¹⁵

These circumstances suggest that, even if Vicente's characterization of Jewish speech were to be considered accurate, phonetic, morphological, and lexical elements would in no way single out a distinct Jewish variety of Portuguese. This survey of Vicente and other non-Jewish sources indicates that while Portuguese used to portray Jews may have particular linguistic features, the majority of such are hardly exclusive to Jewish speech. Following is a discussion of Jewish sources of Portuguese written in Hebrew script that further demonstrates minimal linguistic differentiation between Jews and their compatriots.

¹¹⁰ Vasconcellos 1881, 47.

¹¹¹ Dunn 1928, 27-28.

¹¹² Ford & Moffatt 1933, 70.

¹¹³ **fazer**-*Auto da Lusitânia* (152, 183, 186, 170); **trazer**-*Auto da Lusitânia* (252); **ouvir**-*Farsa de Inês Pereira* (653), *Diálogo da Ressurreição* (56); **poder**-*Auto da Lusitânia* (110).

¹¹⁴ *Auto da Lusitânia* (153); *Auto da Lusitânia* (5); *Auto da Lusitânia* (219, 229); *Diálogo da Ressurreição* (227); *Auto da Lusitânia* (115); *Auto da Lusitânia* (370, 380).

¹¹⁵ Stern 1961.

Jewish Sources

The corpus of Jewish¹¹⁶ manuscripts allows for a somewhat clearer picture of Jewish varieties of Portuguese for the late Medieval period. Wexler¹¹⁷ mentions a series of Medieval peninsular Portuguese texts written with Hebrew characters from the early to middle 15th century¹¹⁸ that have been identified and briefly studied by 20th-century linguists.¹¹⁹ A more thorough investigation was recently conducted by Strolovitch¹²⁰ in a dissertation-length reanalysis of language usage in five of the texts: *O libro de komo se fazem as kores* (Parma ms. 1959), *O libro de maḡika* (Bodleian ms. Laud Or. 282); Passover I (Bodleian ms. Can Or. 108); Passover II (Brotheron ms. Roth 71); and a medical prescription (Cambridge ms. Add.639.5).¹²¹ Strolovitch¹²² demonstrates that the Portuguese of these texts differs from Modern Portuguese only for some vernacularisms and archaisms, and other slight variations. He also highlights that what may be regarded as Jewish in character in a single text is not found in others from the same corpus, nor in post-1496 documents of Jewish origin.¹²³

I would like to remark, however, that whatever variations might suggest the existence of a late Medieval “Judeo-Portuguese” are revealed not to be such if compared to contemporaneous (late 13th to early 15th century) Latin-script Portuguese texts. Although the Portuguese linguistic

¹¹⁶ Texts are considered Jewish as Hebrew characters are employed to write late Medieval Portuguese, thus assuming Jewish authorship.

¹¹⁷ Wexler 2006, 1985.

¹¹⁸ Dating the text *O libro de komo se fazem as kores* is still under debate. A.J. Cruz & L.U. Afonso (2008) discuss the possible origins and history of the text, questioning 1262 as its year of completion in favor of the late 15th century, due to linguistic and watermark evidence (also in agreement with Blondheim (1928), Metzger (1977), and Strolovitch (2005)).

¹¹⁹ Blondheim 1928; Llubera 1952-1953; Hilty 1957-58, 1982; Salomon 1980

¹²⁰ Strolovitch 2005

¹²¹ i. ***O libro de komo se fazem as kores*** (Parma ms. 1959) is a text written in late medieval Portuguese with Hebrew characters, concerning manuscript illumination techniques. The text is often attributed to Abraham ben Judah Ibn Hayyim from the 13th century Loulé, and currently belongs to a miscellaneous collection of Hebrew, Castilian and Portuguese manuscripts in Parma’s Biblioteca Palatina; ii. ***O libro de maḡika*** (Bodleian ms. Laud Or. 282) is an astrological text of over 800 pages, attributed to Juan Gil de Burgos. Ignazio G. Llubera in 1953 compiled only a single transliterated folio of the entire manuscript; iii. **Passover I** (Bodleian ms. Can Or. 108) are guidelines within a Hebrew prayer book, written in 1485 for a Passover *seder*; iv. **Passover II** (Brotheron ms. Roth 71) is similar to Passover I, and attributed to the late fourteenth century (by its owner Cecil Roth); v. **Medical Prescription** (Cambridge ms. Add.639.5) previously misidentified as a Judeo-Spanish text, contains a brief medical prescription written in Portuguese with Hebrew characters, perhaps from the 15th century. In addition, there is a second Bodleian astrological text studied by Hilty (1957-58, 1982) that remains unpublished. Sharon (2002) also mentions two further texts on medicine located at the Biblioteca Publica Municipal 14 de Porto, Portugal (written in Aljamiado), and the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York (adopted from Strolovitch 2005, 78-81).

¹²² *Ibid.*, 351

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 189.

heritage was one of the first to emerge in Medieval Europe, Portuguese was one of the last European languages to establish an orthographic standard (as late as the 20th century). As expected, historical orthographic variations that may or may not reflect a particular pronunciation are not restricted only to Hebrew script texts. Following is a reintegration of orthographic variations in Jewish sources that serves as a brief overview of clear parallels in both late Medieval Hebrew and Latin script texts.¹²⁴

In terms of transcription, I will start by outlining general characteristics of scribal consistency of complicated phonetic elements in late Medieval Portuguese, by comparing concurrent Hebrew and Latin texts. As a first example, the Medieval Portuguese (and Castilian) phonetic distinction between [s] and [ç]¹²⁵ is replicated by Hebraicized Portuguese texts as ש and ס, respectively. More complex orthographic variation, involving word-final nasals, is also exhibited in parallel in Hebrew and Latin script texts:

Orthography of Word-final Nasals			
A. Portuguese in Hebrew Script	Transliteration	Orth. Variants ME Port.	Modern Portuguese
נוך ⁱ	<i>non</i>	non ^{SANS.} ; nom ^{MN.} ; nõ ^{ALE}	não
נאא ⁱ	<i>nao</i>		
אינטון ⁱ	<i>enton</i>	enton ^{CR}	então
אינטואר ⁱ	<i>entou</i>		
אונה ⁱ	<i>una</i>	huũ ^{ALE} ; huũa ^{RR} ; hũa ^{RR}	uma
ראזון ⁱⁱ	<i>razon</i>	razom ^{MN}	razão
ראזואיש ⁱⁱ	<i>razoes</i>		
B. Examples of Hebrew Script Orthographic Inconsistencies			
אינסלשאון ⁱⁱ	<i>ensçalsaçon</i>	exaltação	
אישאלסואיש ⁱⁱ	<i>esalçoes</i>		
וירמיליין ⁱ	<i>vermelyon</i>	vermelhão	
בירמילאאר ⁱ	<i>bermelao</i>		

¹²⁴ Examples adopted from Strolovitch 2005, Ch. 7, and independently compared to examples from late Medieval Christian and secular texts (various, cited below).

¹²⁵ A voiced coronal sibilant or a voiceless palato-alveolar sibilant: [z] or [ʃ], and a voiceless alveolar fricative: [ts]

מאנר ⁱ	<i>mano</i>	mão
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Table 1: A chart of word-final nasal orthographies in late Medieval Hebrew and Latin script texts. A. compares Portuguese in Hebrew script (with transliterations) to similar orthographies found in contemporaneous Latin script texts. B. shows orthographic variation in Hebrew script texts of Portuguese without direct parallels found in Latin script texts. For both, the Modern Portuguese equivalent is in the rightmost column. Examples adapted from Strolovitch 2005, i-v.

While some variations from the 13th century are still present, as shown in Table 1, orthographies for nasalization on final syllables clearly vary in patterns similar, if not identical, to those seen in Latin script texts. Moreover, in Hebrew script orthography ך most likely served to mark the nasalization of the previous vowel rather than indicate a full sound. This follows contemporary usage of the *til* [~], which began as a small superscript *n*, and was later modified to a diacritic above nasal vowels.¹²⁶

In addition, Hebrew and Latin script texts demonstrate further confusion over medial nasal syllables. For both scripts, a deleted ‘n’ is written (perhaps for etymological purposes) in some cases, while in others it is omitted (but sometimes also restored in Modern Portuguese). Again, one can see spelling variations converge under a similar pattern for both Jewish and standard texts (Table 2).

Orthography of Medial Nasal Syllables in Hebrew Script Texts (compared to Latin script examples)			
Portuguese in Heb. Script	Transliteration	Modern Portuguese	Compare to ME examples of Latin script: <i>castelhãos</i> (castelhanos), <i>grãde</i> (grande), <i>cõ</i> (com), <i>erã</i> (eram), <i>boõs</i> (bons), <i>diserõ</i> (disseram) ^{bs}
קוראנא ⁱⁱ	<i>korona</i>	coroa	
קומיינסא ⁱ	<i>komeinça</i>	começar	
שולאנר ⁱⁱ	<i>solano</i>	solão	
Example of Infixed Deleted Nasal Syllable (Restored in Modern Portuguese)			

¹²⁶ Haury 2008, 53.

מֵאוֹשׁ ⁱⁱ	<i>meos</i>	menos	Compare to ME examples in Latin script: <i>mēos/meos</i> (from Latin minus) (Hauy 2009, 97)
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Table 2: Orthography of infixed medial syllables and an example of an infixed deleted nasal syllable compared between Portuguese late Medieval texts in Hebrew and Latin scripts. Hebrew script examples use ן to mark nasals similarly to contemporary Latin script *til*-usage, which likewise differ from Modern Portuguese. Hebrew script examples adapted from Strolovitch 2005, i-v.

Besides for nasalization, both texts also show a trend in multiple vowels when there is no etymological diphthongization or vowel hiatus. Hebrew script examples include: אֵינְטֵינְדִּי – *enteende* (‘entende’-understands), גֵּיֵאִימִינִיⁱⁱ – *geemini* (‘gêmios’-twins), etc. Latin script examples show an identical pattern in such words as *sseeta* (seta-arrow), *beesta* (‘besta’-beast), and *ssaae* (‘sai’-leaves).¹²⁷ Conversely, both text types show retention of diphthongs that have coalesced into a single vowel in modern Portuguese. For example in the Hebrew script texts, *O libro de maḡika*: טְרֵאוֹטָארⁱⁱ – *trautar* (‘tratar’-try), and לוֹיטָאדוֹרⁱⁱ, *luitador*–(‘lutador’-fighter); and in Latin script texts: *augua* (‘agua’-water), *limguoas* (‘línguas’-tongues), *afoguar* (‘afogar’-drown) etc.^{RR} Also, variation deviating from modern *a/o* usage, *estrolomia* (‘astronomia’-astronomy), and *estromentos* (‘instrumentos’-instruments),^{mn} is likewise written with a *yod* in Hebraicized texts, אֵיִשְׁטְרוֹלוֹגִיָּאⁱⁱ – *astrologia* (‘astrologia’-astrology), and רֵיִאִינִיָּאשׁⁱⁱ – *reenyas* (‘rainhas’-queens).

In addition to orthographic similarities, grammatical elements unique to Portuguese - both Medieval and Modern - are also present in Hebraicized Portuguese texts. Among the Romance languages, Portuguese is unique for its wide usage of the future subjunctive construct, which is indeed seen throughout Hebraicized texts (Table 4A). Similarly, personal infinitives are also employed in both text types (Table 4B). Finally, clitic object pronouns are placed between the verb stem and the periphrastic future tense - a distinctive trend in Medieval and Renaissance Portuguese (Table 4C).¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Taken from an excerpt in the *Demanda do Santo Graal*, a 15th century Portuguese adaptation of the French *Post-Vulgata*; “*Senhor, quando a sseta ssaae da beesta, nom vay tam toste como a eu vy corer.*”^{SG}

¹²⁸ Strolovitch 2005, 355.

A. Future Subjunctive Construct in Hebrew Script		
Hebrew Script Ex	Transliteration	Translation
ⁱⁱ ראזואיש דאש פורא טיויר ביאין פור איל קואנדו ⁱⁱ	<i>kuando el por been tever fora das razoes</i>	‘when He considers it good beyond reasons’
ⁱⁱⁱ דירן הכנסת בית די שאירין קומו ⁱⁱⁱ	<i>komo sairen de beit hakeneset</i>	‘when you leave synagogue’
B. Personal Infinites in Hebrew Script		
ⁱ וירמיליון פאזיריש פארא ⁱ	<i>para fazeres vermelyon</i>	‘in order to make red...’
ⁱ קונוסיריש או פארא דואו טי ⁱ	<i>te dou para o konoçeres</i>	‘I give you [this sign] so that you recognize it’
C. Clitic Object Pronouns in Hebrew Script		
ⁱ ברשאש אש שוברי פואילאש אי קוליאאר נא דייטאלואש ⁱ	<i>e deita-lo-as na kulyar e poe-l-as sobre as brasas</i>	‘and put it in the spoon and place it over the embers’
ⁱⁱ אינטינדיר אימוש פודירלאש ⁱⁱ	<i>poder-las emos entender</i>	‘[so] that we may understand them’
Table 4: Chart showing examples of Medieval Portuguese future subjunctive construct, personal infinitives, and clitic object pronouns in Hebrew script (adapted from Strolovitch 2005, 354-355)		

Morphologically, one sees similar patterns as well. Dulce De Faria Paiva¹²⁹ notes the tendency for Medieval Portuguese to form nouns with the suffix *-mento* (from Latin *-mentu*; *reçebemento*¹³⁰ (reception), *pobramento*¹³¹ (population), *despreçamentos*¹³² (scorn), and *falamento*.¹³³ This pattern is also present in Strolovitch’s corpus,¹³⁴ for example in: מינטו (ex.: ריסיבימינטו—*reçebemento* (‘recepção’-reception), פובראמינטו—*pobramento* (‘população’-population), דישפריסאמינטטוש—*despreçamentos* (‘desprezos’-scorns), and פאלימינטו—*falemento* [‘fala’-speech]. Anomalous formations can be found in certain feminine plurals in *O livro de maḡika* (ליגומיאשⁱⁱ—*argolyas* [‘argolas’-rings], אנימאליאשⁱ—*animalias* [‘animais’-animals],

¹²⁹ De Faria Paiva 1988, 23-24.

¹³⁰ Lorenzo 1968.

¹³¹ Viterbo 1798, 222.

¹³² Moreira 2005, 281.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 326.

¹³⁴ Strolovitch 2005 375-376.

legumyas [‘legumes’-vegetables]). However, this might reflect the tendency prevalent until the 16th century to form plurals of suffixes *-al*, *-ol*, and *-ul* as *-ales*, *-oles*, and *-ules* (–*ais*, –*ois/oes* in Modern Portuguese),¹³⁵ or simply a scribal inconsistency (as elsewhere in the text such feminine plurals are written resembling the modern standard).¹³⁶

While it is clear that for the majority of provided sources, variation within Hebraicized texts conforms to that also found in Latin script documents from the late medieval period, there are minor anomalies that cannot be accounted for outside of seemingly “Jewish” texts (particularly, *O libro de maḡika*).

Hebrew Script Text	Transliteration	Medieval Portuguese Ex.	Modern Portuguese
ⁱⁱ פולגורא	<i>folgura</i>	folgura	folga
ⁱⁱ פריאורא	<i>friura</i>	friura	frio
ⁱⁱ קוטאש	<i>koytas</i>	coita	coitado
ⁱⁱ פורניסאוש	<i>forneçios</i>	fornício	fornicação
ⁱⁱ סליסטרי	<i>çeleçtre</i>	‘celestial’	celestial
ⁱⁱ שובירביר	<i>soberbio</i>	‘soberbiar’	soberbo
ⁱⁱ קוביסאדייראש	<i>kobiçadeiras</i>	cobiçadoyro	cobiçável

Table 3: A compilation of Hebrew script examples taken as anomalies present only in Hebrew script corpus by Strolovitch (2005, 379-381), and accounted for in Medieval Portuguese from Latin Script texts (Moreira 2005 – respectively on pgs.: 336, 341, 225, 337, 214, 529, 224)

Moreover, Strolovitch’s corpus, particularly *O libro de komo se fazem as kores* and *O libro de maḡika*, show a relatively higher degree of Arabisms (ⁱאליידי–*alvaiade* < *al-bayāḏ* [white lead], ⁱמארפיל–*marfim* < *al-fil* [ivory], ⁱאשיריס–*xadrez* < *aš-šītranġ* [chess], ⁱⁱאלאסיר–*alacir* < *al-^caṣīr* [harvest])¹³⁷ and Castilianisms (ⁱⁱנינגון–*ningun* [‘nenhum’-none], ⁱⁱפאלאדו–*falado* [‘achado’-found]). Perspective from Jonathan Ray¹³⁸ might help explain this phenomenon, as he suggests many Jews preferred towns along the Spanish border as it provided cheaper land with lower taxes. In the case of Arabisms, the content of the documents, which deal with alchemy and

¹³⁵ Haury 2005, 70; such as *capitales* (‘capitais’-capitals), *soles* (‘sóis’-suns), *paules* (‘pauis’-marshes).

¹³⁶ Strolovitch 2005, 378.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 390-391.

chemical compounds, might have had to do with Jews' role in transmitting Arab science to new Christian overlords.

To summarize, variations within Portuguese Hebraicized texts from the late Medieval Period seem to be consistent with similar trends throughout the larger body of 13th to 15th century manuscripts. My analysis, thus, supports the validity of Strolovitch's claim¹³⁹ – which was based, however, on the anachronistic comparison with Modern Portuguese – that “the use of Hebrew script is simply not a sufficient condition for presuming it to represent the early rumblings of the elusive pre-expulsion Judeo-Portuguese dialect.” Textual evidence, in addition to the relatively small sample size of Hebrew script texts, provides little support for a distinct peninsular “Judeo-Portuguese” language developing in the late Middle Ages. Orthographic and morphological patterns present in the Hebraicized texts generally resemble those seen in Latin script texts, and lexical variations (archaisms and vernacularisms) are probably more likely due to the documents' subject matter.

Whatever the linguistic similarities to Medieval Portuguese observed in the corpus, it remains to discuss the use of Hebrew characters, which should particularly stand out given Jews' moderate lack of segregation within Portuguese society. The continued usage of the Roman alphabet is a distinctive feature of Romance languages,¹⁴⁰ and so it would seem that other sociological factors were involved in influencing the use of Hebrew script, which neither was well-suited for the Portuguese language nor served the practical needs of Jewish commerce outside their communities. While it might be easier to explain the usage of Hebrew script in the Passover I and Passover II manuscripts (in which the Portuguese in Hebrew script offers instructions between Hebrew prayers), the remaining documents concern non-religious topics pertaining to Jewish craftsmanship and medicine. Various explanations arise: perhaps expert Jewish craftsmanship and technical skills led Jewish syndicates to conceal trade knowledge from Hebrew-illiterate competitors.¹⁴¹ This may very well have been the case, especially in light of Jews' disproportionate involvement in medicine and other crafts. Daniel Romano¹⁴² notes that, at least in Medieval Spain, Hebrew was still occasionally spoken and written for non-religious

¹³⁸ Ray 2006.

¹³⁹ Strolovitch 2005, 88.

¹⁴⁰ Romanian and other eastern Romance languages mark an exception, using the Cyrillic script until the 18th century.

¹⁴¹ Due to the emphasis on Torah study, Jewish men were typically literate throughout Medieval Europe, unlike non-Jewish countrymen (Rustow 2010).

topics, and was at times employed as what I would call a cryptoglossia around non-Jews.¹⁴³ A sociolinguistic perspective might also consider that transliteration in Hebrew script indicated an affirmation of a dual identity—the perpetuation of the Jewish covenant by means of its expression within the linguistic and cultural horizons of Portugal.¹⁴⁴

Conclusion

In trying to place Jewish varieties of Portuguese within the larger field of Jewish linguistics, we need to consider the broader emergence of vernaculars in Iberia and more generally in Europe during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, often in conjunction with processes of political consolidation. Due to protection and economic opportunities, the Jews had a deep investment in the identity whose affirmation accompanied the solidification of the Portuguese kingdom. Jews then shared in the institutionally-driven linguistic developments in ways that allowed them to still maintain their Jewishness.

What exactly these ways might have been, however, is difficult to say. At best, it seems that the variety of Portuguese spoken by Jews is representative of a sociolect not restricted to Jews, except in the case of Hebrew inclusions.¹⁴⁵ All the same, what is remarkable about Jewish Portuguese is its strong resemblance to Latin script sources. On the other hand, non-Jewish sources seen in 15th- and 16th-century Portuguese literature serve more to illustrate the level of social integration of Portuguese Jews than to accurately portray language in the *judarias*. As mentioned above, it was within the repertoire of Medieval and early modern playwrights to cast certain characters typologically, exaggerating particular jargon and pronunciation to distinguish particular groups. Gil Vicente's inclusion of Hebrew words stands out more prominently, as the author most likely had no knowledge of the language. Perhaps certain Hebrew words characterized Jewish Portuguese speech, although when this same tendency is witnessed in many

¹⁴² Romano 1992.

¹⁴³ On the other hand, Fudeman (2010) notes that in 11th to 15th century Old French manuscripts written in Hebrew script, topics remained religious (usually as side notes to Hebrew language texts), and vernacular remnants otherwise resemble standard Old French. This was probably due to stronger antisemitism in Medieval France, leading Jews to blend linguistically by using French.

¹⁴⁴ This can be especially seen in diaspora communities, as Judaism persists in association to both Portuguese Sephardic and Jewish *grandeza*.

¹⁴⁵ For which the degree of Hebrew word usage is impossible to ascertain.

present-day Jewish communities, it is hardly considered as more than a slight variation within a single language.

As a final note, the linguistic situation of conversos after the mass conversion of 1497, and the recommencement of the Portuguese Inquisition by D. João III in 1536, should also be mentioned. Given the already established linguistic integration and the new pressure to assimilate as New Christians, it can be inferred that the language of the Jews would have only further converged with general linguistic norms. However, further studies may wish to focus on this interim period in greater detail, as the language that survived in diaspora communities was a direct descendant of whatever changes might have occurred in Portugal during the remainder of the 16th century.

Overall, determining the linguistic status of Portuguese spoken by Jews while still in Iberia is critical in weighing the sociolinguistic factors maintaining its persistence in the *nação portuguesa*. At one level, Miriam Bodian,¹⁴⁶ Daniel M. Swetschinski,¹⁴⁷ and Nathan Wachtel¹⁴⁸ relate the linguistic and cultural integration experienced by Portuguese Jewry to a continued sense of past *grandeza* associated to the Golden Age of Portuguese Jewry. Similarly, Portuguese was used as a language of instruction to revive Judaism in conversos who had lived as Catholics for generations. However, at a more immediate level, the history of the Portuguese language as it pertains to the Lusitanian *Sephardim* continues throughout the history of the Portuguese, and later Dutch, Flemish, German, Spanish, and English trade networks, as this language came to serve the commercial needs of diaspora communities. In the following chapters, I will analyze Jewish varieties of Portuguese in the *nação portuguesa*, in order to delineate the persistence of the language after expulsion until the mid-19th century.

¹⁴⁶ Bodian 1997

¹⁴⁷ Swetschinski 2000

¹⁴⁸ Wachtel 2009, 2013

CH 2: NORTHERN *GRANDEZA*

Linguistic Usage and Identity in Amsterdam and northwestern Europe

The goal of this chapter is to survey the development and the sociolinguistics of the varieties of Portuguese used by Sephardic communities in northwestern Europe. Due to the interrelated nature of Jewish Portuguese exile communities, and the resulting cultural and linguistic exchange, Hamburg and Amsterdam will be the main focus of this study, while the communities of London, Antwerp, Cologne, and secondary Dutch cities will also be discussed for context. It will be shown how the dual economic and religious function of the Portuguese language, and the relationship of Portuguese with contact languages (Spanish and Hebrew in particular), created a unique linguistic situation in which the Portuguese language was actively maintained up until the early 20th century, despite being associated with persecution at the hands of the Inquisition. The chapter will also analyze the details of linguistic usage in the Sephardic centers of northwestern Europe. A corpus of manuscripts from the 17th to 20th century will be discussed in terms of the general trends in phonetic/orthographic, morphological, lexical, and semantic variation that characterizes northern Portuguese Jewish speech.

Overall it will be shown that: 1) the Portuguese language of these communities resembles that contemporaneously spoken in Portugal; 2) it presents certain archaisms, regionalisms, and deviations, each of which occurs outside of Jewish speech as part of Portuguese, or at least Ibero-Romance, linguistic phenomena; 3) a combination of these variations, however, characterizes Jewish speech; 4) and as a result, Jewish speech is clearly placed within the broader continuum of Portuguese dialects.

“Portuguese in nation, and a Jew in religion”¹⁴⁹

The reestablishment of a Jewish presence in northwestern Europe is traditionally considered to have begun in Amsterdam in 1606,¹⁵⁰ when the Ashkenazi rabbi Uri Halevi was sent to the community from Emden, and donated a Torah scroll to the newly founded

¹⁴⁹ From Menasseh ben Israel’s description of António de Montesinos (Aharon Levi) in *Esperança de Israel* (1650); cf. Bodian 1997, 153.

¹⁵⁰ The Jews were expelled from England in 1290.

congregation.¹⁵¹ However, a more obscure Portuguese Jewish presence can be seen developing already in the 1590s, and can be regionally traced even further back to the beginning of a Portuguese *feitoria* ('factory, or trade post') first established in Bruges in 1445 (though trade between Flanders and Portugal began as early as the 13th century).¹⁵² Subsequently, in 1499, the *feitoria* was moved to Antwerp, although, due to the Spanish invasion in 1576, many Jewish or crypto-Jewish Portuguese merchants migrated either directly or indirectly to nearby Amsterdam, Hamburg, Cologne, other Dutch cities, and later London.¹⁵³

Although the debate is ongoing about the motivations driving the gradual flow of Portuguese New Christians¹⁵⁴ (and among them a spectrum of crypto-Jews)¹⁵⁵ to northwestern Europe, in hindsight it appears that emigration not only proved advantageous for the Portuguese Jewish merchants (especially in the 17th century), but also lent itself naturally to the convergence of exile and cultural repossession crystalizing within the *nação portuguesa*.

From a religious perspective, it is important to consider that in northwestern Europe anti-Jewry laws had not been enacted for centuries simply due to the absence of Jews in the region. However, with the steady influx of Portuguese New Christian merchants (many among whom had Jewish inclinations) and refugees throughout the 17th century, in particular the Low Countries, Hamburg, and later London gradually came to acknowledge their small Jewish communities.¹⁵⁶ While a complete religious description of the northwestern European Jewish Portuguese diaspora falls outside of the scope of this study, the perpetuation and evolution of linguistic identity within the *nação portuguesa* cannot be removed from the initial success of 17th century Luso-Sephardic Judaism, and will be discussed partially under this lens below.

From an economic perspective, however, it is necessary to first step outside of a purely Jewish context, and to examine the Portuguese economy in terms of its concurrent climax and successive centuries-long decline. The unprecedented debt resulting from the 1578 loss at *Al-*

¹⁵¹ Bodian 1997, 1.

¹⁵² Prestage 1925, 171-237.

¹⁵³ Swetschinski 2000, 64; Disney 2009, 147.

¹⁵⁴ That is, to what extent emigration from Portugal was motivated by socio-religious or economic reasons.

¹⁵⁵ The extent of crypto-Judaism is beyond the scope of this study. The term is used to cover the wide spectrum of Jewish inclinations present among New Christians; cf. Gitlitz 1996; Paulo 1996.

¹⁵⁶ Amsterdam in particular, remained ambiguous towards its 'Jewish question' until 1642 when the Jewish community was formally recognized and accepted (so long as it remained relatively inconspicuous). The community's relative prominence was due in large part to an intentional effort to re-espouse Portuguese Judaism by actively recruiting members from throughout the Luso-Sephardic diaspora cf. Bodian 1997, 132; *Ibid.* 57-68. Israel 2002.

Kasar al-Kabir against Muslim forces, where D. Sebastião died without an heir, decisively tipped the balance in favor of the already looming Spanish dominance. With the 1580 Iberian Union, Portugal was swept, after an initial period of economic and cultural autonomy, into the global political orbit of Habsburg Spain. While for Portugal-based merchants this eventually meant a series of crippling embargoes with the English and Dutch (on whose silver and copper they were dependent for trade with India),¹⁵⁷ the advantageous geopolitical situation of the forcefully dispersed members of the *nação* enable them to circumvent such trade restrictions. Those involved in Portuguese trade still benefitted from Portugal's exclusive monopoly over Brazil, in addition to the newly-gained access to the entirety of Spanish possessions, from Potosí to the Philippines. Moreover, the restrictions enforced on Iberian goods in enemy ports (such as England and the Netherlands), and the reverse limitations on Dutch goods in Spanish-controlled European and colonial ports, meant that continued use of these commercial circuits required documentation from German, French, or other intermediate ports.¹⁵⁸ Such passports were more easily accessible to Portuguese Jewish merchants than to their Dutch or Portuguese competitors, a circumstance that resulted in close partnerships in which one city's merchants supplied the trade goods and the others the necessary travel papers.¹⁵⁹ While similar personal networks certainly worked to the benefit of the *nação portuguesa*, they also limited Portuguese Jewish economic activities to a narrow, though highly specialized, arena (70% of the Amsterdam community claimed to be a "merchant"). This facilitated a mercantile system in which trading centers could be maintained via stationary agents, whose trustworthiness was primarily based on kin affiliation, achieved in part through a common language.¹⁶⁰

Meanwhile, there was also incentive to migrate back to Spain among many Portuguese New Christians, as the Castilian Inquisition in the 1580s had become notably less severe.¹⁶¹ Thanks to their financial savvy, Portuguese New Christians were also favored by Spanish court officials over the Genoese bankers, who were losing their monopoly.¹⁶² This, in addition to extensive settlements (up to 25% of Seville inhabitants were Portuguese during the course of the

¹⁵⁷ Disney 2009, 147.

¹⁵⁸ Swetschinski 2000, 107.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. *ibid.* 69; The decline of Hamburg in the second half of the 17th century correlates to the rise of London, though by then Portugal had become independent.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 103-104.

¹⁶¹ Disney 2009, 208.

¹⁶² Israel 1985, 24-26.

union),¹⁶³ not only led to the eventual reinvigoration of the Inquisition in Spain aimed at New Christian prosperity, but also worked to further blur the boundary between Portuguese and Spanish identities within the *nação*. While this ambiguity found a different expression in each region of Sephardic migration, communities in northwestern Europe are interesting for their more conscious and prolonged attempt to create a series of boundaries between Portuguese and Spanish sociolinguistic domains, especially considering the fact that these attempts were made within a non-Romance speaking environment. However, when considered together, the economic, religious and cultural developments of the Luso-Sephardim organically led and contributed to the complex linguistic situation of the northwestern European Jewish setting, and occurred as a natural outcome of a unique instance of ethnic redefinition.

The Linguistic Context of the Luso-Sephardim

The northwestern European context was peculiar for accommodating the linguistic coexistence of Castilian and Portuguese brought about by the commerce of the Luso-Sephardim escaping persecution in Iberia. The evolving but continued function of Portuguese within the *nação portuguesa* in northwestern Europe through the 16th-20th centuries represents a puzzling sociolinguistic situation, in which the two languages of Iberian exile acted as uniting forces to define the notions of Luso-Sephardic kinship and solidarity. The persistence of Portuguese (and its variations) alongside Castilian¹⁶⁴ into the early 20th century can be viewed from two perspectives. On the one hand, Portuguese was associated with the trading network of the *nação portuguesa* that pre-existed Iberian expulsions, and was therefore propagated in order to facilitate business transactions among other Luso-Sephardic communities (in northwestern Europe, the Mediterranean, Asia, the New World, and Africa). On the other hand, Portuguese was the native language of the overwhelming majority of the original émigrés in northern European communities, and so served as both a means of binding the community culturally and

¹⁶³ Disney 2009, 206.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 278-279; As mentioned in introductory notes, Paul Wexler draws a noteworthy distinction between Judeo-Spanish and Ladino. Ladino should be distinguished as a calque translation (literal word-for-word) to Castilian from Biblical Hebrew, used specifically for religious texts. Judeo-Spanish represents 15th-century Spanish spoken by Jews (whose character changes after the expulsion), used as a vernacular in both spoken and written contexts; Wexler 1977, 1982, & 1985.

religiously (through common speech, community records, and sermons) and as a viable method of reintroducing former New Christians to Judaism and the broader Sephardic community.

What follows is a more in-depth analysis of the sociolinguistic role of Portuguese and Castilian among the northern European Luso-Sephardim.

The Castilian¹⁶⁵ Language

After the consolidation of Spain in 1469 under Isabel I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon, the Castilian language firmly established itself as the language of Iberian prestige. Deemed more universal than Portuguese, it was readily used by the upper strata and literary circles of Portuguese society, and was employed alongside Portuguese by many of Portugal's most famed writers (e.g. Gil Vicente, Sá de Miranda, Bernadim Ribeiro, and Luís de Camões).¹⁶⁶ Thus, already a century before the union of 1580, Spain's official political dominance and accompanying cultural influence seemed inevitable.¹⁶⁷

The spread of Castilian language and culture affected also Luso-Sephardic Judaism. Although the majority of this work is devoted to studying the Portuguese language of the *nação portuguesa*, in speaking of northwestern European Portuguese Jewry one cannot overlook the conspicuous¹⁶⁸ usage of the Castilian language within a nearly homogenous community of Portuguese émigrés. Generally speaking, Castilian was the language of higher literary expression—both in non-Jewish Iberian and Sephardic circles—and was thus considered better suited for higher-register works, such as translations of the Bible, of liturgy, and of Rabbinical commentaries.¹⁶⁹ It was also adopted in the curriculum of higher Jewish education, both for its elevated linguistic status (an Iberian vestige) and because in the early stages of settlement New Christians returning to Judaism lacked knowledge of Hebrew, thus requiring aids for their reeducation. Classic works such as Ibn Paquda's *Hovot ha-lebabot*, Maimonides' *Sefer ha-*

¹⁶⁵ I refer to Castilian rather than Spanish in order to refer to official usage, and not minority languages/dialects such as Argonese, Leonese, etc. in Spain.

¹⁶⁶ Paiva 2008, 171.

¹⁶⁷ Disney 2009, 151.

¹⁶⁸ Though limited to Portuguese merchants who resided in Spain, or were highly educated; Swetschinski 2000, 278.

¹⁶⁹ Cecil Roth also notes that in 1664, the London Portuguese Jewish community initially constituted its communal regulations in Castilian. Overall he notes that, relative to other northern Portuguese Jewish enclaves, Castilian was more a presence in London, though this may have been simply due to augmented commercial ties between Spain and England during the 17th and 18th century; Roth 1959; Bodian 1997, 95.

mitzvot, and Yosef Caro's *Shulḥan Arukh* could not be found in Portuguese translation until later in the 17th century, and had to be consulted either in Hebrew or in their Castilian/Judeo-Spanish¹⁷⁰ (or Ladino) translation.¹⁷¹ Even into the 17th and 18th century acquaintance with Hebrew was more or less imperfect, and Talmud study seemed to take a secondary position to Bible study (as a remnant of years lived as Christians) and helped contribute to the persistence of the language.¹⁷²

Castilian also functioned as a language uniting the entire Iberian diaspora, which was predominantly Judeo-Spanish-speaking. This can be poignantly observed in the major centers of northwestern Luso-Sephardic Jewry (Amsterdam, Hamburg, and London, in particular) in which this status was consciously perpetuated by the Portuguese Jewish communities, each explicitly modeling their congregations after the Judeo-Spanish speaking *kahal* in Venice.¹⁷³ Moreover, for example, in Fernão Alvares Melo's (David Abenatar Melo) *Los CL Psalmos de David en lengua española, en varias rimas* (Frankfurt 1626),¹⁷⁴ the author, originally from Lisbon, indicates that his usage of Castilian is in order "to awaken [the reader] to the divine literary legacy of [his] people," thus showing the important inclusive function performed by Castilian in the intentional construction of a broader Sephardic identity to which the Jews of Portuguese origin could be part.

Most interestingly, the grafting of the Portuguese diaspora onto the culturally Spanish and Castilian-speaking Sephardim was also reinforced through a secular interest in Castilian through the adoption of Spanish intellectual habits, and the consumption of Spanish works. Writing poetry in Castilian was a popular trend among some Portuguese merchants, such as Miguel (David) Levi de Barrios and Abraham Pereyra.¹⁷⁵ In addition, two Spanish-style *Tertulias literarias* (or cultural salons) were established in Amsterdam (*Academia de los*

¹⁷⁰ Judeo-Spanish is a term that requires some qualification—traditionally it is divided into two independently derived dialects: East Judeo-Spanish, or Hakitiia (spoken in North Africa), and West Judeo-Spanish, or Judezmo, spoken in the Levant and Balkan region; Wexler 1977.

¹⁷¹ *Libro intitulado Obligacion de los coraçones, compuesto por el excelentissimo senor el grande Rabenu Moseh de Aegypco*, (Amsterdam 1610); *Tratado de los Articulos de la Ley Divina* (Amsterdam 1652); *Libro de Mantenimiento de la alma* (Venice 1627; Amsterdam 1649).

¹⁷² Israel 2003, 83-85.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Salomon 1982, 160-161; Bodian 1997, 37.

¹⁷⁵ Roth 1959.

Sitibundos in 1676 and *Academia de los Floridos* in 1685), and throughout the 17th century contemporary Spanish theatre was popular among the wealthy Portuguese merchants.¹⁷⁶

The esteem of the Castilian language among northwestern European Luso-Sephardic communities, however, was not destined to last forever. By the second half of the 17th century, Portuguese managed to affirm itself as a language of literary expression among Luso-Sephardic Jews in Amsterdam (and in the nearby center of Hamburg) alongside Castilian,¹⁷⁷ in part as a result of the re-centering of the Luso-Sephardic diaspora from Venice to Amsterdam. In addition to these inner-Sephardic dynamics, Castilian underwent a decline as a language of publication during the 18th (and perhaps residually in the 19th) century in these communities due to a series of political and cultural factors that worked to both isolate them from Iberia and other centers of the Sephardic diaspora, accelerating their assimilation to local languages and cultures.

Additionally, it should be considered that after 1492 the majority of Portuguese Jews originated from Spain, and their native tongue was Castilian. It would seem an equally likely outcome that, after emigrating, their descendants would gradually return to their traditional language, given the presence of Castilian alongside that of Portuguese. While this was more or less the case for many communities along the Mediterranean, the situation in northwestern Europe is unique for its maintenance of Portuguese, instead of Castilian or Judeo-Spanish, as a spoken language. This linguistic situation can be explained as due to both the absence of preexisting Jewish communities (which spoke Judeo-Spanish or another similar Romance language [see discussion of Italy in Chapter 3]), as well as the distinct importance of the Portuguese language to northwestern European commerce. Essentially the group known as “Portuguese” became synonymous with Jewish merchants, which contributed to the Portuguese language becoming *de facto* a *lingua franca* of sorts among those involved in early-modern European commerce where the Jews were predominant. Nonetheless, the literary adoption of Castilian, which was initially made necessary by the absence of religious Jewish literature in Portuguese translation, soon began to signify the Portuguese diaspora’s rise alongside the already established Judeo-Spanish-speaking Sephardim. The persistence of the Castilian language, consciously nurtured in order to create a broader “Iberian” Jewish identity, in fact strongly

¹⁷⁶ Bodian 1997, 93.

¹⁷⁷ Although Spanish use in London experienced greater longevity into the end of the 19th century, perhaps due to the community’s solidification during increased Spanish dominance; Roth 1959; Price 1974, 171.

contributed to the emergence of Luso-Sephardic prominence and its independent sense of *grandeza*.¹⁷⁸

The Portuguese Language

Moving back to this study's language of focus, a brief historical overview of the Portuguese language allows for a greater understanding of the language's permanence and development in northwestern European Sephardic centers.

The major reforms brought about by the Inquisition's official commencement in Portugal coincide with a major transition period for the Portuguese language. From the period between the successional crisis in 1385 and the establishment of the first tribunals in 1536, the language of the founding Lusitanian dynasty, referred to as Galician-Portuguese, began to gradually give way to what is known as Old Portuguese,¹⁷⁹ whose spoken norm, known as *português comum*, is described by Serafim da Silva Neto as a koiné of Portuguese dialects mostly derived from the Lisbon and Coimbra areas.¹⁸⁰ During this stage of linguistic development the first historiographical works were written in Portuguese (the first being by Fernão Lopes, 1385-1464), and the influx of Latin lexicon (adapted to Portuguese phonetics) spread more widely, driven by the expansion of the Portuguese university system. The formation of Old Portuguese is the product of the gradual division between the Galician language in the Spanish north and what would become the modern Portuguese language.

It is under these linguistic circumstances that the 16th-century Portuguese Jews-turned-New Christians came to coexist with their Catholic counterparts, and subsequently either assimilate or flee the Peninsula over the course of the 16th and 17th centuries.¹⁸¹ Portuguese, or a derived form thereof, was the native language of the overwhelming majority of Iberian Jews in Amsterdam and other northwestern European centers.¹⁸² It was the predominant language of

¹⁷⁸ This cultural and sociological process found a linguistic correspondent, which will be discussed in detail below, in the Castilianization of the Portuguese language spoken by these Jews.

¹⁷⁹ Although Galician-Portuguese remained as a literary language for the next two centuries; Paiva 2008, 180.

¹⁸⁰ Silva Neto 1970, 404.

¹⁸¹ Due to this prolonged migration and continued contact with Portugal, it would be misrepresentative of the true linguistic situation to speaking of a 'fossilized' archaic Portuguese preserved in northwestern Europe. Still, there is ample evidence of linguistic archaisms (discussed below) that originate from a variety of circumstances.

¹⁸² Swetschinski 2000, 278-279.

sermons, communal records, and everyday conversation, as well as, in later centuries,¹⁸³ the language of Talmud study. This language, spoken by Jews up to the early 19th century, is remarkable because of its very persistence—both as a language that facilitated commerce within the *nação portuguesa* and Portuguese trade circuits, and for its bridging function in reclaiming the Portuguese Jewish heritage.

The most immediate role of the Portuguese language was to serve Portuguese exile trade networks by insuring trustworthiness and consolidating the Portuguese Jewish community. As mentioned above, this would have been especially advantageous in circumventing embargo and in exchanging contraband.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, the inventory of goods traded by Portuguese Jewish merchants in northwestern Europe (predominantly sugar, tobacco, diamonds, salt, and textiles) was almost exclusively linked to Portugal, Spain, and each of the two kingdoms' colonial possessions. From this angle, thus making usage of Portuguese (and to a lesser extent of Castilian) both an advantage and a necessity within the economic niche of the Luso-Sephardim.

However, the maintenance of Portuguese for at least two centuries cannot be accounted for without considering Jewish communities' conscious effort to return to Judaism, as well as to retain contacts with relatives scattered throughout the Portuguese diaspora. The wealthy merchant and the *hakham* alike partook in a sense of social obligation to the Portuguese language, aimed at perpetuating a distinctive Jewish Portuguese community structure. Usage of Portuguese extended also to the institutional life of the community: for example, the *Santa Companhia de dotar orphas e donzelas pobres*, commonly known as the *Dotar Society*, which provided dowries exclusively to Sephardic Jewish women (preferably Portuguese Sephardic women), was constituted in Portuguese.¹⁸⁵ By the same token, the Portuguese language provided Jewish communities with a language of verbal reeducation, as most members had lived publicly as Catholics for several generations. While the majority of works circulated within the Sephardic diaspora, especially those aimed to re-instill Judaism, were written in Castilian or Judeo-Spanish, some formal works were also written in Portuguese (especially after the end of the 17th century when the center of the Luso-Sephardim shifted from Venice to Amsterdam).¹⁸⁶ One of the most famous early examples is the *Thesouro dos denim, que o povo de Israel he obrigado saber, e*

¹⁸³ Bodian 1997, 92, 160.

¹⁸⁴ For more on Jewish involvement in contraband and pirated goods see Swetschinski 2000, Ch. 3: *Commerce, Networks, and Other Relations: The Inner Workings of Portuguese Jewish Entrepreneurship*.

¹⁸⁵ Bodian 1997, 134.

observer (Amsterdam 1645-47).¹⁸⁷ Guides for learning Hebrew were also sometimes published in Portuguese, such as *Arvore da Vida: Thezouro da Lingua Santa*, and *Vocabulario Da Lingua portuguesa Explicado em Hebraico*, both by Solomoh de Oliveyra.

Therefore, for reintegrating Judaism into everyday life, the use of Portuguese was for a long time an obvious choice. The usage of Portuguese (as well as Castilian) in northwestern European Jewish centers did eventually meet with a gradual decline, due to a series of interrelated social and political factors. For example, in 19th-century Amsterdam,¹⁸⁸ when Dutch had become the native tongue of the Portuguese Jewish community, Moses Belinfante entrusted to his *Portugeesch leesboekje*¹⁸⁹ the hope of promoting the continued utilization of Portuguese as part of Jewish education,¹⁹⁰ which had become increasingly impractical in a community that had eventually begun to assimilate to Dutch culture. Hamburg was sooner to lose its Portuguese linguistic heritage, and by the eighteenth century became overshadowed by nearby Amsterdam's dominance, while in London, English political relations with Spain (and unified Portugal until 1640) gave the Castilian language a more prominent footing than in other Luso-Sephardic centers in the region.¹⁹¹ Moreover, external factors, such as the Enlightenment and the French invasion of the Hamburg and Netherlands (which brought along Revolution-inspired ideals of a centralized government and language), sent the linguistic institutions of northwestern European Portuguese Jewry into perpetual decline.¹⁹² Henceforth Portuguese would be a language maintained in cultural memory into the early 20th century in borrowed lexicon, and in some cases, still used for sermons and Talmud study in the 19th century.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Mendes 1911, Ch. IV; Kayserling 1971.

¹⁸⁷ Written by Menasseh ben Israel in Portuguese "for the use of our Portuguese Nation."

¹⁸⁸ According to José Leite de Vasconcelos in 1889 "le portugais est ... à Amsterdam une langue morte"; Vasconcelos 1970.

¹⁸⁹ *Portugeesch leesboekje, Gronden der Portugeesch spelkunst, ten gebruike der Armenschool van de Nederlandsche Portugeesche Israëlitén te Amsterdam*. Amsterdam. 1816. 48 pgs.

¹⁹⁰ Bodian 1997, 92.

¹⁹¹ Sárraga 2002; Campos 2002.

¹⁹² *Ibid.* 157-160.

¹⁹³ Such as Iberianized Dutch words – pacuz ['pakhuis'-warehouse], escotete ['schout'-sheriff], and vira ['bier'-beer]; Teensma 1993, 70; cf. Cassuto 1773, Teensma 1993, Roth 1959.

Varieties of Portuguese Jewish Speech in northwestern Europe

Before beginning a linguistic analysis of northwestern European Jewish varieties of Portuguese, it should be mentioned also that emigration occurred initially from the Douro-e-Minho and Madeira regions, and then after the 1620s shifted to Trás-os-Montes and Alentejo (in which the largest settlements of New Christians came to be located, notably in Évora, Beja, and Portalegre).¹⁹⁴ These regions are located in the extreme fringes of Portugal, whose dialects correlate extensively to Jewish sociolects described both below and in Chapter 1.¹⁹⁵

In this section the exact linguistic status of northwestern European Jewish Portuguese will be analyzed following the data (once reorganized) of Pedro da Silva Germano's *A língua portuguesa usada pelos judeus sefarditas no exílio*.¹⁹⁶ Germano analyzes a corpus of thirteen manuscripts written between the 18th and the 19th centuries, in addition to three works from the early 20th century that compile Portuguese vestiges in northwestern Europe,¹⁹⁷ in order to survey orthographic/phonetic, morphological, and lexical aberrations relative to normative Old and Modern Portuguese.

Expanding the chronological range of his examination, this study adds material from 17th-century manuscripts made available by the Etzs Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Monetzinos in Amsterdam.¹⁹⁸ Aberrations in the 17th-century corpus will be compared to both contemporaneous and modern-day Portuguese, as well as to the variations collected in Germano's thesis. Texts examined include a narrative sermon (EH47B11.15 & EH47B11.16), religious poetry (EH47E05), a religious discourse (EH47D32.10), and a Hebrew grammar written in Portuguese (EH47D07). Generally speaking, these texts show patterns similar to those seen in Germano's corpus (discussed below), and are for the most part minor and orthographic/phonetic

¹⁹⁴ Swetschinski 2000, 60, 73-74.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. Teyssier 1959.

¹⁹⁶ Germano 1968; This dissertation from the University of Lisbon is essentially the only broad-scope analysis of northeastern European varieties of Portuguese among Jews. It is notable for having been published when research could still be done on a very small population of Luso-Sephardim who were still more or less familiar with Portuguese. It should also be noted that this document is in poor circulation, and confusing to follow as it is filled with errors that are often corrected by hand. The copy analyzed for this study was borrowed from the Library of Congress, itself a poor photocopy of the original.

¹⁹⁷ 18th century manuscripts include seven religious and five didactic texts; 19th century manuscripts include one didactic text; See Table I (Bibliography) for a complete list of manuscripts; Germano 1968, 38.

¹⁹⁸ See Appendix for transcription of sampled folios; cf. <http://www.etsheimmanuscripts.nl/manuscripts/>

idiosyncrasies. This is not wholly unexpected, as the 17th century marked the first waves of migration, when many Portuguese émigrés would have been born in the Iberian Peninsula.

Ultimately, my analysis will reveal that many of the phenomena pointed out by Germano as grammatical and lexical abnormalities, as well as of the aberrations found in 17th-century northwestern European Luso-Sephardic manuscripts (not studied by Germano), can actually be encountered in the language contemporaneously spoken in the Peninsula, although they show an increasing level of deviation leading up to the 20th century. In addition, we will observe the predominance of regional and/or archaic¹⁹⁹ elements (explainable perhaps with the erudite subject matter of sermons and instructional texts²⁰⁰) and several instances of hybridization with Spanish, Italian, French, and Dutch lexicon.²⁰¹

What follows is a more in-depth summary of linguistic variation from the 17th to the 20th century. Examples are given according to variation type (phonetic, morphological, etc.), and are cited both by study and source manuscript.

Phonetic/Orthographic Variation

Orthographic variations, which may or may not suggest phonetic divergence, are the most obvious aberrations observed in the documents analyzed. While one always runs the risk of considering copying errors as true variation, orthographic reliability becomes a deeper issue when trying to ascertain the extent of variation in phonetics versus etymological reversions, the latter of which seems to have been conscientiously attempted in Amsterdam and Hamburg in some examples. Following is a compilation and discussion of notable orthographic variations found throughout the corpuses, and their likely sources.

Starting with representations of nasalization: The non-nasalization of final vowels occurs as an archaism (*assi* or *assy*, *amy*, *si* or *sy*, *demy*, etc.),²⁰² and can be observed also in non-Jewish

¹⁹⁹ Archaic features were still a feature of peninsular Portuguese among non-Jews, and could be found throughout common speech well into the 18th century; Spina 2008, 290.

²⁰⁰ Texts chosen due to subject matter, as they would have been written by the most educated members of the community, and in a tone of high erudition. This serves as the best control in establishing a ‘standard’; Germano 1968, 40-41.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 183-189.

²⁰² *Assim* (TVL:119/SS:21/ EH47E05.06), *a mim* (GH:13), *sim* (SS:11/NGP:46), *de mim* (GH:13); Germano 1968, 47.

texts from the 12th to 14th centuries.²⁰³ Denasalization also occurs occasionally in the final syllable -em (*home, passage, vantaje*, etc.), while at other times a nasal vowel may be added to words ending in -em (*costumem, volumem, crimem*, etc.).²⁰⁴ Particular plural formations of the suffix -vel (as in Modern Portuguese ‘possível’) were occasionally formed with a nasal consonant (*imposivens, insensivens, inumeravens, plausiveins, racionavens*, etc.), and a nasal graph following an unstressed initial vowel sometimes altered the preceding vowel (*amparár, empídio, emportant*, etc.).²⁰⁵ Archaic nasal orthographies encountered in some 17th-century texts, such as *hũa/huã* (‘uma’-indefinite article, f.), can also be found in non-Jewish sources from the same period.²⁰⁶

Besides nasal syllables, vowel usage and alternation show a high degree of variation. Diphthongs are at times reduced to monophthongs, especially *ou* to *o* and *ei* to *e* (*dexe, dexou, dinhérro* or *dinherio, primera* or *primeira* [within same text], and *afloxar* or *affroxar, dos, tampoco*, etc.).²⁰⁷ Additionally, a continuous fluctuation can be observed between *ou* and *oi/y* forms (*roixo, dois* or *dous, royxinól*, and *doudo, noute, outo*, etc.), as discussed in Chapter 1. Interestingly, the more learned *ou* form, whose adoption was a trend in Peninsular Portuguese, can be found in words that had not undergone the same process in Portugal, and, due to the register of many of the texts analyzed. These diphthongs’ fluctuation is still heard in European dialects in northern Portugal (*ou* pronounced as [oj]), and is reflective of a preserved feature of northern Lusitanian dialectology, of which, prior to expulsion and emigration, Jews were naturally part.²⁰⁸ We can also remark on the additional reduction of *ai* to *a* when next to palatal *x* (*abaxar, caxa*, etc.), which highlights the overall trend for the semi vowel [i] to be dropped from digraphs *ai, oi*, and *ui* when in contact with [ʃ].²⁰⁹ Vowel assimilation is also widespread, with the most common graphic patterns being *e-i* to *i-i* (*anticipiação, diffinição, seguinte, persiguirão*, etc.), and *i-i* to *e-i* (*deficuldade, dezia, felecidade*, etc.). Germano comments that such vowel

²⁰³ Haury 2008.

²⁰⁴ *Homem* (LPH:92), *passagem* (SPS:Ded), *vanatgem* (GH:49); *costume* (SMC:27), *volume* (SMTH:10), *crime* (SPS:10, 11); Germano 1968, 61; the same phenomenon is witnessed in modern-day interior Brazilian and northernmost Portuguese (Monção) dialects (cf. Nunes 1930, 113; Vasconcelos 1928, 16).

²⁰⁵ *Impossiveis* (SS:13), *insensiveis* (SS:3), *inumeraveis* (SPS:12), *plausiveis* (SS:11), *racionaveis* (SS:22); Germano 1968, 66; *emparar* (TVL:79), *impídiu* (AEIS:48), *importante* (TVL:379); Germano 1969, 51.

²⁰⁶ EH47D07.002; Paiva 2005, ‘Textos Anotados.’

²⁰⁷ LPH:91, LPH:95, TVL:91/EH47B11.15.184, AEIS:74, GH:57, TVL:40 (AEIS:Ded), AEIS: 15, GH:20; Germano 1968, 64, 68.

²⁰⁸ Azevedo 2005, 185, 190.

²⁰⁹ Cf. Nunes 1930, 80-18; TVL:5, TVL:213; Germano 1968, 62.

pattern alterations were widespread in Old Portuguese, and especially present in southern dialects.²¹⁰ Segismundo Spina also notes that *a/e* variations persisted into the 17th century in European Portuguese texts.²¹¹ Lastly, there are variations in final unstressed vowels, with -e becoming -o or -a, depending on gender (and so may be due to etymological concerns; ex.: *bása*, *chispo*, *especia*, *Guilhermo*, etc.), as well as the reverse silencing of unstressed vowels -o and -a with -e (especially prevalent in 20th-century documents, ex.: *escolhe*, *psalmiste*, *agore*, *palavres*, *snoge*, etc.).²¹² For the later example in particular, the relatively common usage of some words, such as *agore* (agora-‘now’), *palavres* (palavras-‘words’), and *snoge* (sinagoga > *snoga/esnoga*-‘synagogue’)²¹³ suggests that such orthographic patterns may have indeed reflected Sephardic pronunciation by the 20th century.

There are also instances of syllable modification through the addition or deletion of particular vowels. The apheresis or prosthesis of an initial a- is well attested throughout Iberia as an archaism/regionalism. Examples of apheresis include: *bastecér*, *benço-ou*, *presento*, *quentarse*, etc., and examples of prosthesis include *aprova*, *arrefêns*, *agabar* etc.²¹⁴ In addition, paragogic additions are made, most frequently as -e at the end of a word, such as *açúquere*, *alcácere*, *abrire*, and might be due to contact with Italian.²¹⁵

In terms of consonant alterations, three major patterns emerge. The first involves the convergence of the phonemes [b] and [v], with the former more often replacing the latter than vice versa (exemplified by seventy-two examples taken from the corpus, such as *bespera*, *bolver*, *combem*, *affâbel* or *affâvel*, *palabra* etc.). Notably, the labiodental [v] (although written ‘v’ formally) is virtually absent from many northern European Portuguese dialects where only the bilabial [b] can be heard, and in the case of some words modern Portuguese has come to accept both graphic forms (*assobiar* or *assoviar*, *beliscar* or *veliscar*, etc.).²¹⁶ There is also the continued *l-r* confusion as demonstrated in Chapter One. Examples of r-confusions include;

²¹⁰ *Anticipação* (TV:84), *dfinição* (SMTH:12), *seguinte* (GH:46, 48), *perseguição* (AEIS:98); *dificuldade* (SS:15), *dizia* (throughout), *delicidade* (AEIS:7); Germano 1968, 53.

²¹¹ Spina 2008, 293.

²¹² *Base* (TVL:148), *chispe* (TVL:286), *especie* (SS:14), *Guilherme* (RHL:181/TV:Cover/ EH47E05.06); *escolha* (TVL:123), *pslamista* (SMC:14), *agora* (RHL:193), *palavras* (RHL:197), *snoga* (RHL:192); Germano 1968, 57-60.

²¹³ Cf. Kerkhov 2005.

²¹⁴ *Abastecer* (TVL:149), *abençou* (AEIS:8), *apresento* (SMC:Ded), *aquestrar-se* (TVL:747); *prova* (RHL:189), *refens* (TVL:108), *gabar* (TVL:40); Germano 1968, 49-51.

²¹⁵ TVL:26, TVL:54, RHL:188; Germano 1968, 57.

²¹⁶ LPH:98/AEIS:53, 90, NGP:189/AEIS:7, 70, LPH:throughout, TVL:33, EH47B11.15.184; Germano 1968, 69-70; Azevedo 2005, 185.

sarmão, faránte, plural, and of l-confusions include: *cérebro, floxa, regra*.²¹⁷ Finally, the pre-16th-century four-way differentiation of Portuguese sibilants (1. [s]; 2. [ts] or [s]; 3. [z]; and 4. [dz] or [z], written as 1. *s-* or *-ss-*; 2. *c^{e/i}* or *ç*; 3. *-s-*; and 4. *-z-* respectively) was simplified in Sephardic speech differently than in the peninsular Portuguese system: while after 1550 Peninsular sibilants n. 2 ([ts], written *ç*) and n. 4 ([dz], written *z*) were reduced in pronunciation to [z] and [s] respectively, northwestern European Sephardic texts suggest that written *-s-* and *-z-* came to graphically represent [s], whereas *-ss-* and *-ç-* came to represent [z].²¹⁸ However, a great deal of abnormal variation still remains, with representations as varied as *-ss-* used for [š] (ex.: *Adar Risson*).²¹⁹ Other peculiar representations of fricative consonants are *j* in place of *ch* for [j] (ex.: *jegada*), *s* in place of *x* for [ʃ] (ex.: *deise, fasa* or *fayse* or *fanche, meseren*), and *ty* in place of *ch* for [tʃ] (ex.: *borratye, depatyare*).²²⁰

As a final note, orthographic variation (that may or may not suggest phonetic variations) might have been due to an author's use of shorthand, a consideration which is particularly relevant to the case of sermon manuscripts that may have only been conceived as notes to be read aloud, and not meant for circulation. Still, sermons are important sources of linguistic evidence due to their erudite nature, reflecting some sort of a linguistic standard that would still have been easily understood by listeners.

Morphological Variation

Morphological differences also occur, although more frequently in the later centuries. At a basic level that also borders with orthographic variation, some nouns appear to be given a different gender than standard (*eléfoa, comua, as arvores, o ágoa, o neve*, etc.), and certain plural forms vary, particularly the plural of *-ão* (*bençoëns* or *bençoês, leóems* or *leóims*), and *-il* (*facís*

²¹⁷ *Salmão* (TVL:818), *falante* (TVL:463), *plural* (NGP:throughout); *cérebro* (SH:19), *frouxa* (GH:57), *regra* (GH:12); Germano 1968, 76-77.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.* 78-83; Teyssier 1980, 60.

²¹⁹ It appears *-ss-* was used also to represent Hebrew *ש* (also *Mosseh*), although see Leone 2006 in Hebrew pronunciation among Sephardim; EH47B11.15.184

²²⁰ PC:xxvii, RHL: 194, RHL: 190, RHL:197, RHL:193, RHL:195; Note that the pronunciation of 'ch' as /tch/ persisted until the 18th century in some parts of Portugal and Brazil (Amaral 1955, 48); Azevedo also mentions that in northern Portuguese dialects today, there is a tendency towards slight palatization of /s/ and /z/ to slight [ʃ] and [ʒ], respectively (Azevedo 2005, 185); *Chegada; deixe, faixa, mexerem*; (Cast.) *borracha, despachar*; Germano 1968, 83-84.

or *facis* or *faseis*, *fragiles* or *fragis*, etc.)²²¹. Similar difficulties arise with the suffix -vel, and can be seen throughout texts from the 15th and 16th centuries during which time the original intervocalic -l- gradually assimilated. Also, there are some peculiar numerical formations, especially in AEIS, in which the suffix -eno is added to ordinal numbers, (*novena/o*, *dozeno*, *onzeno*, *prima*, etc.).²²²

At a deeper morphological level, pronouns in verbal forms are highly variable, both in placement and orthography. For example: the indirect object pronoun *lhe* is often written as -le or -lle when attached as a suffix (*arronjalles*, *assistindolle*), and clitic object pronouns either do not affect the infinitive of the verb, or are dealt with in a variety of forms, such as *fazer-o*, *jantar-as*, *trazêl-os*, *têl-os*, etc.²²³ A tendency is also observed (with some variation) to leave articles and preposition uncontracted, (*a os muy illustres...*, *subir a as núvis...*, *a o outro aumenta...*, *por o singular...*, etc.).²²⁴ Finally, some adverbs retain a regional or archaic character, such as *antão*, *donde*, *despois*, and as already mentioned, *assi*.²²⁵

Verb forms are also highly variable and in some instances reduced. When it comes to linguistic usage, ‘*haver*’ (to have) is used exclusively as an auxiliary in the active voice (*que me ha influido...*, *não hey falado demasiado...*, etc.), although it can be found in such expressions as ‘*aver frio*,’ ‘*aver fome*,’ and ‘*aver de*²²⁶ [...]’ This is interpreted as an archaic linguistic feature, which was going to slowly be replaced in texts from later centuries, such as NGP and AEIS, by the utilization of the verb ‘*ter*’ (to have). Verb conjugations are also slightly altered or reduced. In particular, the second person plural of the preterit perfect indicative and the future subjunctive underwent diphthongization (*fizesteis*, *fosteis*, *dissesteis*, and *quizedeis*, *souberdeis*, etc.).²²⁷ Interestingly, verbal conjugations belonging to the third Latin conjugation paradigm are reduced in verbs with altered vowels (ex.: *acaber*, *falter*, *gozer*, *jenter*). Additionally, studies on Judeo-

²²¹ TVL:366, SC:25, LLP:16, TVL:281, LLP:16; AEIS:31-11/SG:26, SC:6/TV:4; LLP:20, NGP:301, GH:14, SMTH:12/SH:19, SMC:16; Germano 1968, 96-97, 99, 100.

²²² NGP:337/PA:3/AEIS:4; AEIS:22; GH:50/AEIS:14; SG:9/AEIS:32-74/SPS:3; Germano 1968, 100-101.

²²³ *Arroja-lhes* (SMTH:11), *assitando lhe* (SMTH:11); *fazê-lo*, *jantá-lo*, *trazê-los*, *tê-los* NGP/LLP: throughout); Germano 1968, 104-105.

²²⁴ *Aos muy ilustres* (SC:3), *subir às nuvens* (TVL:2), *ao outro aumenta...* (SG:23), *pelo singular* (GH:10); Germano 1968, 107.

²²⁵ *Então*, *de onde*, *depois*, *assi* (throughout/ EH47B11.15.184); Germano 1968, 131-136.

²²⁶ SS:8, TVL:131; LPH:88; Germano 1968, 114-115.

²²⁷ SMTH:16, SPS:11, NGP:163, LLP:18, LLP:20; Germano 1968, 112-113

Spanish show what might be considered parallel verb simplification in North African and Eastern Sephardic dialects, in which -ir verb infinitives are reduced to -er, and -ir to -ar.²²⁸

Syntactic Variation

Syntactic variation in the texts is mostly very minor, and generally demonstrates a stylistic preference more than true deviation. Adjectives appear before nouns, a phenomenon most likely due to the subject matter of the texts (sermons, instructional texts, commemorations, etc.), for which it is also typical of standard Portuguese to prefer such anteposition in formal registers.²²⁹ More notable variation occurs with the replacement of 'por' with 'de' in marking the agent of the passive construct (ex.: *como não foy amoestado **de** Déos e repreendido **do** Propheta*), although both Germano and Azevedo note that this variation is permissible in literary Portuguese.²³⁰ Additionally one encounters varied non-typical use of relative pronouns, such as 'quem' instead of 'que' or 'qual,' and 'qual' instead of 'que' (*neste anno moreo Nahor, de 148 annos, **quem** naceo no anno 1849..., referi exemplos dos casos **quaës** regem*).²³¹ Lastly, the usage of the verbal present indicative construct in place of the present and future subjunctive conjugations (which may also be considered a form of semantic variation) marks a clear deviation from peninsular norms (ex.: *não quer Deus que os homens **operão** muytas obras que lhes falta a boa vontade*).²³²

Lexical and Semantic Variation

The 17th-century corpus and Germano's show greater lexical flexibility through time, especially in terms of loanwords, as various contact languages have left a clear mark on Jewish Portuguese in northwestern Europe. However, in the case of Castilian, the most influential among these languages, it is often difficult to tell whether a word matching Castilian orthography is the product of lexical borrowing or of diphthongization of a cognate Portuguese word (possibly still due to Castilian influence). Generally speaking, because of the similarity of

²²⁸ TVL:7, SG:20-21, SG:20-21, TVL:525; *Ibid.* 116-117; Bénichou 1968, 236-237; Wagner 1930, 72, 73, 102, 114.

²²⁹ Germano 1968, 130-132, 141-144.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 149; SMTH:2; Azevedo 2005, 165.

²³¹ AEIS:7; NGP:214; Germano 1968, 151-152.

Portuguese, Spanish, and other Ibero-Romance languages it is often impossible to definitively establish such words' origins.²³³ In addition the texts present Italian loan words such as *pícola* and *prima*, French-based words such as *chansoneta* and *villagens*, a single English hybrid, *pilimgrina*, and certain Dutch hybrids, such as *cantaresboekje*, *subirjongen*, and *medrassanten*.²³⁴ These languages in particular would have been mostly in contact with (if not gradually replacing, in the case of Dutch) Portuguese in northern European Jewish communities, due not only to trade, but also to incoming migration, from France and Italy in particular.

It is also interesting to consider the many forms of modern Portuguese *Deus*, or God, which appears as *D.*, *DS.* *Déos*, *Deós*, *Deus*, *Dio*, and *Dios*. As discussed in Chapter 1, the final *s* was sometimes dropped in order to scrupulously conform with Jewish monotheism, although Germano states that in his corpus spellings that include *-s* occur more frequently.²³⁵ Furthermore, the presence of *El-Dio*, a Castilianism similar to that observed in the non-Jewish Portuguese form 'El-Rei', is interpreted by D.S. Blondheim as a calque translation of *הוא ברוך הקדוש* ('*ha-qadosh barukh hu*'-the blessed one, may He be blessed).²³⁶ This construct is also used in LPH of the Germano corpus.

As a final note on lexical variations, Germano lists formations found only in his Sephardic texts. He offers possible meanings and etymologies, although many of these forms may simply be orthographic errors or shorthand.²³⁷ Also semantic variations involving otherwise unmodified Portuguese lexicon (often few and minor) occur, especially relating to Jewish ritual: for example, the word *levantadores*, which normally means 'those who lift,' came to be associated with congregation members given the honor of *hagbahah* (the lifting of the Torah).²³⁸ In one 17th-century text²³⁹ there was also wide use of the exclamation *guay*, used by Gil Vicente in his stereotypical characterization of Jews (see Chapter One "Non-Jewish Sources").²⁴⁰

²³² Correct: *operem*; SG:10; Germano 1968, 153.

²³³ Wexler 2006, 485

²³⁴ Port. *pequeno* (small TVL:702), and *primeira* (first); Port. *cançoneta* (small song TVL:282), and *vila* (village, town AEIS:82); Hybrid of Port. *peregrino*, and English 'pilgrim' (Wexler 2006, 516); Hybrid of Dutch and Portuguese for 'songbook' (RHL:189), 'Bar-Mitzvah age boy' (RHL:192 [Port. *subir* – to go up, Dt. *jongen* – boy]), and Arabic, French, and Dutch (Wexler 2006, 522 [Heb. *midraš*-'religious school, French participle ending, and Dutch plural marker]); Germano 1968, 160-161.

²³⁵ The last two examples are probably from Spanish influence; Germano 1968, 161-163.

²³⁶ Blondheim 1923; Germano 1968, 161-163.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 165-177.

²³⁸ Cf. RHL:190, *cit.* in Germano 1968, 179-182 (cf. *ibid.* for several other examples).

²³⁹ Cf. EH47D32.10, f.191v & 192v

²⁴⁰ Cf. Teyssier 1959, Ch. IV "Les Juifs."

Conclusion

A few conclusions can be drawn from the examination pursued throughout this chapter. As seen repeatedly, the majority of the aberrations found in the texts analyzed fall within the contours of linguistic phenomena (mostly regionalisms or archaisms) already known and described as part of any number of contemporaneous non-Jewish varieties of Portuguese. Few of the features of Luso-Sephardic varieties of Portuguese are unique to the northwestern European context (Hebraisms used to refer to specifically Jewish concepts being the most recognizable among them). Nevertheless, the particular combination of such features was indeed distinctive, and contributed to confer to Sephardic Portuguese speech in northwestern Europe a peculiar character amidst broader Portuguese dialectology. In light of these results, the qualification of this variety of Portuguese as specifically “Jewish” lacks a substantial historical and linguistic foundation except for the obvious circumstance that it was spoken by Jews. However, this close affiliation with Iberian linguistic norms indicates that northwestern communities at least made an attempt to remain affiliated with Portuguese erudition.

Finally, the uniqueness of the northwestern European context, and the absence of other Sephardic communities at the time of initial settlement, should be emphasized. As a result, the language of the Luso-Sephardim developed within relatively fewer pre-existing sociolinguistic substrata than in other diasporic Sephardic centers (where Romance languages were already spoken), and was thus given a better chance to be perpetuated. This fact, along with the intentionally maintained functional separation of the Hebrew and Castilian language, ultimately led to a state of “stunted multiglossia” unique to the *nação portuguesa*. From the perspective of a “Jewish repertoire” of linguistic influence, it seems that these three languages of Iberian Judaism went thus hand-in-hand with a Luso-Sephardic identity, as they played an essential role in constructing Iberian-based Jewish institutions. Moreover, centers such as London and Amsterdam, appear to have been able to maintain a distinctive self-recognition as Portuguese Sephardim from the simple lack of other Jewish communities. As will be shown in the following chapters, this is an important contextual distinction, as in nearly all the locations in which the *nação portuguesa* settled that already hosted a Sephardic community, the Portuguese identity of émigrés came to be absorbed by the founding Jewish society.

CH 3: LOST AT SEA

Linguistic Usage, Identity, and Assimilation in the Mediterranean

“Jewish endogamy is kin-based, not geographically based”²⁴¹

The development of Mediterranean-based Luso-Sephardic networks represents a gradual process through the 16th and early 17th centuries. The cultural composition of these circles was constantly in flux, and still heavily dependent on trade with Iberia and northwestern settlements. Since 1536, inquisitorial activities in Portugal had been relatively moderate. However, after 1580 the levels of persecution and surveillance surpassed those of Spain, creating a lasting climate of fear for New Christians, whether devout or Jewish in secret.²⁴² As a result, many Portuguese New Christians chose to leave the Peninsula for the Ottoman-controlled Balkans, Anatolia, and the Levant, where preexisting Sephardic communities had steadily established after expulsion from Spain in 1492.

Many Luso-Sephardim chose such centers as, Salonica, Valona (Vlorë), Adrianople (Edirne), Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Tripoli, Safed, Jerusalem, and other minor cities, in all of which the majority of Iberian exiles returned to Judaism.²⁴³ In the 1560s the largest concentration of Portuguese Jews could be found in the Levant (Palestine and Syria-Lebanon). Safed soon grew to be the largest Luso-Sephardic community in the Levant, and by the second half of 16th century Portuguese Jews constituted about one fifth of the total Jewish population in the city. After that point Spanish Jews (Castilian, Aragonese, Catalanian, etc.) became the majority, attracted to Safed as both a religious center and a major hub in the eastern textile trade. Jerusalem also hosted a small Portuguese settlement, although other Levantine cities to the north (Tripoli and Damascus, for example) provided greater economic incentive. Yet, already by the end of the 16th century these communities began to decline with the onset of trade difficulties, political diversions, and industrial wanes, choosing to migrate westwards to Balkan communities with which Levantine networks were in close affiliation.²⁴⁴

²⁴¹ Trivellato 2000.

²⁴² Israel 2002, 24-43.

²⁴³ Galanté 1927.

²⁴⁴ Israel 2002, 47-56

Along this route, major Portuguese Jewish centers in Salonica and Istanbul expanded. Ottoman census data from the mid-16th century indicates that, although the Sephardim in Salonica were the minority in relation to the entire Jewish population, Jews from Aragon and Portugal outnumbered the Castilian.²⁴⁵ However, subsequently to the decline of communities in the Levant, the city established itself as a major stepping-stone between trade in the Middle East and Western Europe, and by 1613 Jews constituted 68% of the total population.²⁴⁶ Salonica also remained a center of Sephardic spiritual and cultural authority into the end of the 16th century, despite the prominence of nearby Venice.²⁴⁷ Situated in a similar geopolitical context, also Istanbul became a major intermediary locus, though one whose Jewish population taken as a whole was less Iberian in character.²⁴⁸

From a sociolinguistic perspective, Iberian Jews eventually came to absorb the preexisting Greek, Balkan, and Arab Jewish communities, whose members began to speak Judeo-Spanish as a common language of trade and as a symbol of their solidarity. In fact, the Castilian language (in the form spoken by Jews)²⁴⁹ became so identifiable with Eastern Sephardim that it was not only encouraged as part of Ottoman cultural pluralism, but was often mistaken as a language exclusive to the Jews themselves.²⁵⁰ Concerning the Portuguese language, it seems its usage was short-lived in the Levant and Balkans, as the preexistence of Sephardic communities at the time of Portuguese New Christian migrations meant that the cultural and commercial networks of the Jews of the eastern Mediterranean had already been established, and made use of Judeo-Spanish. Furthermore, in spiritual centers such as Safed and Salonica, the memory of Iberian Jewry was naturally constructed in the same languages as those of the cultural context in which it had been created—that is, the Ladino and Judeo-Spanish languages.²⁵¹ Given these economic and cultural circumstances, linguistic assimilation was the most obvious outcome for the Portuguese émigrés. Although there were efforts to create separate

²⁴⁵ Révah 1984.

²⁴⁶ Israel 2002, 86; cf. Lewis 1984, 123.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 85.

²⁴⁸ Many Jewish groups could be found in the city, from Greek Jews to other non-Portuguese Sephardim; Levy 1992, 7-9.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Wexler 2006, 463; The differential impact of (Judeo-)Arabic, Hebrew, and Aramaic, in addition to the varied acceptance of Ibero-Romance linguistic features, sets the Judeo-Spanish language apart from the Castilian language in the 12-15th centuries.

²⁵⁰ Saul 1983.

²⁵¹ As already mentioned, Ladino was a language for biblical translations, and differs from Judeo-Spanish that was the language spoken by the Sephardim; cf. Wexler 2006, Ch. VIII: *Judaized Ibero-Romance*.

Portuguese synagogues, such as in Salonica, Safed, and Istanbul, commercial preoccupations made it such that Judeo-Spanish served a more immediate and facilitative function.

Nonetheless, the Portuguese spoken by one generation of newcomers in these regions seems to have influenced the Balkan and Levantine variety of Judeo-Spanish. Leopold Wagner first noticed that the Judeo-Spanish variety of the Eastern regions had many features typical of northern Castilian and Portuguese dialects,²⁵² which led a series of scholars to attempt to explain these apparent anomalies as “Portuguesisms.”²⁵³ However, Paul Wexler importantly notes, as a general rule, that by selectively relating aspects of Judeo-Spanish with contemporary Iberian dialects and languages, one runs the risk of misrepresenting linguistic trends in Judeo-Ibero-Romance, as such piecemeal approaches may highlight linguistic features that do not necessarily suggest or correspond to the historical origins of speakers. For example, Abraham Galanté labels every initial ‘*f*’ in Judeo-Spanish (in place of Castilian silent ‘*h*’) as a Portuguese loan. While this feature is generally valid for differentiating modern standard Portuguese and Castilian (compare modern Portuguese *fada*, *fidalgo*, *fazer*, *ferro*, etc. with Castilian *hada*, *hidalgo*, *hacer*, *hierro*, etc.), the presence of an initial ‘*f*’ is characteristic of some Castilian dialects, and was most likely present to a greater extent in the 15th century.²⁵⁴ Still, both Wexler and other researchers have compiled a short list of mostly lexical features that seem to suggest Portuguese influence. Below is a brief compilation and discussion of Portuguese linguistic remnants in eastern Judeo-Spanish dialects.

Portuguese Lexical Inclusions in eastern Judeo-Spanish Dialects

First, it should be noted that Judeo-Spanish continues to be spoken today, though in declining numbers, amongst Jews in Turkey, Israel, the United States, and Latin America. The language, however, saw a significant decrease in speakers, first in the 19th century with Jewish populations seeking social advancement vis-à-vis the French language (and to a lesser degree the Italian), and second, in the 20th century with the rise of nationalist movements that emphasized Turkish,

²⁵² Wagner 1930.

²⁵³ Cf. Luria 1930; Sala 1965; Révah 1984.

²⁵⁴ Galanté 1907, 16; cf. Wexler 2006, 438 n. 21.

Greek, or other Balkan languages.²⁵⁵ Also it should be noted that Judeo-Spanish, especially in terms of specific usage, cannot be considered as a single entity, and is traditionally divided into Hakitía (western dialects spoken in North Africa), and Judezmo (eastern dialects spoken in the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Levant). In consideration of the routes taken by Portuguese exiles, it would be expected that only regions of high initial Portuguese settlement (such as Salonica) would exhibit Portuguese inclusions in their Judeo-Spanish dialects. However, Paul Wexler notes that such elements are observed through the whole range of eastern Judeo-Spanish,²⁵⁶ and can be explained as most likely due to the mobility of both Judeo-Spanish and Jewish Portuguese speakers, as well as to the dynamic nature of linguistic appropriation on the part of the Sephardim.²⁵⁷

Considering Portuguese lexical evidence in eastern Judeo-Spanish, a study by Marius Sala, entitled *La organización de una norma española en el judeo-español*, singles out thirty words of clear Portuguese origin with no Castilian counterpart. Among the total, only five are attested among the materials surveyed: *alfinéti* [Mod. Port. ‘afinete’; Mod. Sp. ‘alfiler’²⁵⁸—pin], *amurçarsi* [Mod. Port. ‘murchar(-se)’; Mod. Sp. ‘marchitarse’—to fade, die, shrivel up], *boltár* [Mod. Port. ‘voltar’; Mod. Sp. ‘torcer’—to twist, turn], *embirarse* [Mod. Port. ‘embirrar’; Mod. Sp. ‘enojarse’—to be angry], *fróña* [Mod. Port. ‘fronha’; Mod. Sp. ‘funda de almohada’—pillowcase]. Sala also lists regional Portuguese inclusions in the western Balkans: *alméša* [Mod. Port. ‘ameixa’; Mod. Sp. ‘ciruela’—plum], and *fáiska* [Mod. Port. ‘faísca’; Mod. Sp. ‘chispa’—spark], as well as regional inclusions from the east and south Balkans *embrinearse* [Mod. Port. ‘embrenhar(-se)’; Mod. Sp. ‘enamorar-se’—to be in love, enamored], *çapeo* [Mod. Port. ‘chapéu’; Mod. Sp. ‘sombbrero’—hat], and *anužár* [Mod. Port. ‘anojar’; Mod. Sp. ‘impeder’—to impede).²⁵⁹ Other clear examples are also pointed out by Abraham Galanté writing about the Judeo-Spanish of Istanbul at the start of the 20th century: *arvore* [Mod. Port. ‘árvore’; Mod. Sp. ‘árbol’—tree], *boneca* [Mod. Port. ‘boneca’; Mod. Sp. ‘muñeca’—doll], *calcanhar* [Mod. Port.

²⁵⁵ Schools established in Turkey and the Balkans by the Alliance Israélite Universelle and Centro Dante Alighieri; Saul 1983.

²⁵⁶ And sometimes even seen in Morocco’s western dialect, such as in *fižón* (kidney bean); Wexler 2006, 433-434.

²⁵⁷ The constant influx and contact with Iberia perpetuated Sephardic identity for generations. The earliest settlers were (Judeo-)Spanish speakers, while later settlers spoke Portuguese; Schroeter 2008.

²⁵⁸ Sala misspells the ‘alfiler’ as ‘alfilear’ in Castilian, meaning ‘pin’, pg. 549.

²⁵⁹ Sala 1965.

‘calacanhár’; Mod. Sp. ‘talón’—heel], *fejiao* or *fizo(n)* [Mod. Port. ‘feijão; Mod. Sp. (various)—bean].²⁶⁰

This list, though short, does contribute to our possible understanding of the migration and trade routes of the Luso-Sephardim in the eastern Mediterranean. While some of the above lexical borrowings could have entered the Judeo-Spanish of Spanish exiles in Portugal between 1492 and 1497 (and so could not be attributable to the persistence of Portuguese outside of Iberia²⁶¹), others like ‘*alfinete*’ are not attested in Portuguese until after the 16th century, suggesting that it is unlikely that such examples entered Judeo-Spanish during this period.²⁶² Moreover, the varied presence of Portuguese loans in Judeo-Spanish dialects within Portuguese Jewish émigré communities comments on the mobility of the Spanish and Portuguese Sephardim, and the fluid boundaries of their cultural and linguistic identities.

This becomes especially relevant when considering the 16th-century parallel development of Portuguese Jewish communities throughout the Italian Peninsula. As will be shown in the following sections, the development of a ‘Portuguese’ or ‘Spanish’ identity in Italian cities depended less on the Iberian origins of many Sephardic migrants than on their established location of trade with Ottoman cities. While particular Italian center—most notably Livorno²⁶³—that were new to Jewish settlement (and so populated by Portuguese émigrés after 1536) developed a distinctive Luso-Sephardic identity in most other areas, Portuguese newcomers came to culturally and linguistically integrate with their Sephardic compatriots (whether predominately Spanish or Portuguese in origin) in a fashion similar to that shown in the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Levant. Thus, due to the linguistic appropriation of Judeo-Spanish on the part of Portuguese Jews in Ottoman lands, and to the established trade and cultural diffusion between particular Italian cities with these eastern communities, those Portuguese Jews who settled in the 16th and 17th centuries in preexisting Italian Sephardic centers, such as Venice, were swept into the sociolinguistic amalgamation that had already established in the eastern Mediterranean.

²⁶⁰ Galanté 1907, 31-32.

²⁶¹ Cf. Bernfeld 1918: 269.

²⁶² Machado 1967, v.1, 195; cf. Wexler 2006, 433, n. 16.

²⁶³ A clear parallel can thus be drawn between Amsterdam and Livorno for having developed a distinctive ‘Portuguese’ identity due to the absence of a preexisting Sephardic community.

Venice Between East and West

As was generally the case for most Sephardic settlements, communities that established throughout the Italian Peninsula were drawn to areas of religious toleration and relative commercial freedom. Nevertheless, particular locations in Italy are unique for their active role in attracting Sephardic merchants, whose identity was less determined by their specific ‘Spanish’ or ‘Portuguese’ origin than by their commercial connections with either the eastern or western Mediterranean. These groups were distinguished as *levantini* and *ponentini*, respectively.

In the second half of the 16th century, Ottoman lands were still the preferred location of settlement for Iberian Jewish exiles, especially as many Italian regions at the beginning of the century faced increased pressure from the Italian Inquisition. Meanwhile, Florentine, Genoese, and Venetian merchants were slowly abandoning overland routes linking Salonica and Constantinople with the interior Balkans and Adriatic.²⁶⁴ Gradually, however, this situation worked to the benefit of Greek, Armenian, and Jewish merchants who were geopolitically situated to circumvent such trade restrictions. In particular, the Sephardim adopted the role as intermediaries between Venice (as well as Salonica), and the Levant.²⁶⁵ Realizing the commercial advantages these Jewish merchants would bring, major European powers such as the Habsburgs and the Medici competed for control of these network and their members by providing consular protection and tax exemptions related to trade²⁶⁶.

Within this framework, Venice emerged as a major center of Jewish Mediterranean trade, and a convergence center for the exiled Sephardim from Iberia, eastern Mediterranean, North African, and Italian territories. Meanwhile, the Venetian Republic had an interest in attracting Ottoman Jewish traders, in order to control trade between the western Mediterranean and other Italian ports. For example, it was by the suggestion of the Portuguese converso Daniel Rodriga that between 1589 and 1592 the *scala*, or trade depôt, Split (Spolato) was established to divert trade from Ancona, and ensure Jewish dominance in the Dalmatian trade via Venice. The Republic went so far as to make explicit the Jewish merchants’ strategic and distinctive commercial importance. Setting a precedent for the rest of the peninsula, it did so by formally distinguishing, in 1589, a *ponentini* Jewish trade syndicate from the merchant group of the

²⁶⁴ Accelerated also by a series of wars between the Ottomans and Venetians.

²⁶⁵ Israel 2002, 61-68.

levanini Jews, which had been recognized earlier, in 1541. Especially for the former group, which was comprised for the most part of Portuguese exiles (or at least Jews involved in Portuguese circuits), Venice's formal recognition and toleration of these New Christians who had reverted to Judaism—an action in direct defiance of papal orders—demonstrates the degree to which the Ponentine Jews were considered a crucial asset.²⁶⁷

From the perspective of the Venetian Republic, the legal distinction between the *ponentini* and *levantini* was created in attempt to avoid conflicting the interests of the entire Jewish merchant class who were in total from different backgrounds. However, for the Jewish merchants themselves, the artificial separation of the two groups created a solidarity of sorts. While not all émigré New Christians came to Venice with the intention of reconversion, the emphasis on kin-affiliation in the trade networks of the *nação portuguesa*, and the dominance of Jewish traders in the upper Adriatic, made reversion to Judaism the most practical option for the majority of Iberian tradesmen in the region.²⁶⁸ With this system in place, and as settlement in Ottoman lands became increasingly difficult into the 17th century, Venice established itself as a commercial center of the exiled Spanish and Portuguese Sephardim between East and West, with the *ponentini* and *levantini* specializing in trade with their respective regions.²⁶⁹

Consequentially, the Sephardim of Venice flourished culturally. According to Jonathan Israel, the cultural dominance of Venetian Jewry came to serve as the organizational and political model for the entire Sephardic diaspora, due to its institutionalized upholding of the Iberian Jewish legacy. The Sephardim of the Republic also became the only publishers of Jewish literary materials (the majority of which were written in Ladino, Judeo-Spanish, Castilian, and Hebrew) until after Amsterdam's rise to prominence starting in the early 17th century. Some examples from Venice include: Joseph Caro-*Sefer ha-shuklhan ha-panim* (1602), Moseh Altara *Libro de mantenimiento de la alma* (1609), and a Hebrew-Castilian dual language version of Jewish slaughter rituals.²⁷⁰ Finally, at the apex of their cultural establishment, the Castilian, Catalan,

²⁶⁶ Lehmann 2005.

²⁶⁷ Ravid 1975. Venetian leaders argued that their toleration prevented the Marranos from going to Ottoman lands and strengthening the empire with their 'wealth and industriousness.' Although a Venetian Inquisition was established in 1547, it never issued a single capital punishment between 1555 to 1585, and may have simply been a means to divert papal attention by diminishing the degree of crypto-Judaism[□]; Toaff 1990, 58; Ruspio 2007, 12.

²⁶⁸ Cf. Trivellato 2000.

²⁶⁹ Arbel, Benjamin. "Jews in International Jews: The emergence of ponentines and levantines," in Davis 2001, 73-96; Israel 2002, 85.

²⁷⁰ Kayserling 1971, 29, 32; Israel 2002, 85; Paul Wexler (2006, 1987) also makes the distinction between Ladino calque translations made by Spanish or Portuguese Jews. For the later, such as the Ferrara Bible (translated by

Italian, Sicilian, Portuguese and Greek Jewish groups in Venice eventually merged their congregations, distinguishing themselves instead as either Ponentine or Levantine. Interestingly, this demonstrates how an administrative category came to manifest itself sociologically in terms how types of Venetian Jewish identity emerged.

Regarding linguistic identity, the commercially and culturally central position of Venice within the Sephardic world created significant pressure in the direction of Judeo-Spanish usage. The *levantini*, whether Portuguese or Spanish in origin, operated in spheres where the Castilian language, and its Judaized counterpart, was spoken by the majority, and thus served the direct needs of Jewish (and non-Jewish) traders operating within eastern Mediterranean circuits. The Venetian *ponentini*, on the other hand, offer a more curious case of sociolinguistic affiliation. Although in the first generations after settlement these merchants must have spoken a variety of Portuguese (among themselves and in order to trade with Portuguese-affiliated western Mediterranean ports), there seems to be little evidence showing that Portuguese may have ever established itself communally, in any of its varieties, in the Venetian Ponentine community. Whatever the extent of Portuguese use in Venice, the Republic's decline, beginning in the 1630s following a series of losses to Ottoman forces and the expansion of Portuguese traders overseas, led to the fusing of the remaining *levantini* and *ponentini* (and eventually Ashkenazi) into an Italian-speaking Jewry.²⁷¹

The Medicis and the Jews

The Tuscan setting offers an alternate backdrop for the history of the Luso-Sephardim in the Italian Peninsula. Starting in the early modern period, several cities throughout Tuscany began to challenge the Venetian Republic's dominance within eastern Mediterranean trade, as well as to create new circuits with the western Mediterranean by attracting foreign traders, among whom were the Sephardic Jews of various origins.²⁷² In cities such as Florence and Pisa, the Medici went as far as to encourage a Jewish presence by granting *levantini* merchants protection from

Portuguese Jewish exiles), these translations are less dependent on Hebrew syntax and word-derivations. He also notes that no study comparing Portuguese vs. Spanish Ladino translation norms has yet been conducted.

²⁷¹ Arbel 2001, 94-96.

²⁷² Trivellato 2000.

the Inquisition and offering special rights in trade as well as opportunities, in later generations, to establish professional careers in law, banking, and medicine²⁷³.

In particular reference to the Luso-Sephardim, the development of a specifically Jewish Portuguese presence in the Italian Peninsula can be traced along the expansion of the port of Livorno in the mid-16th century. Beginning in 1571, the Medici, began major renovations on the port town in order to create a Renaissance-inspired “ideal city,” leading to the port’s designation as a duty-free trade zone in the 1580s, followed by its independence from Pisa in 1597.²⁷⁴ As would be expected, many Jewish merchants²⁷⁵ either from Venice or other Tuscan cities, as well as fleeing New Christians (mostly from Portugal), were attracted to settle in the city for a host of reasons, including: ease of trade, automatic citizenship (under the Right of Ballotaggio²⁷⁶), access to universities, administrative and juridical autonomy, and equal rights as Christians. The practice of Judaism was openly permitted, after protection against the Inquisition was stated openly first by Cosmo I de Medici in 1547-1548 (for a ten year period), and then by Ferdinand I de Medici in 1591 and 1593²⁷⁷. By the 18th century, Livorno had become the largest Jewish settlement in the Italian Peninsula, with a total Jewish (mostly of Portuguese descendants) of 4,300 (in 1784) and 5,300 (in 1809)—10% of the city’s total population. In addition, 50 of the 150 commercial houses in the 18th century were owned by Jews.²⁷⁸ Livorno also represents one of the largest Portuguese Jewish settlements, whose cultural and linguistic legacy is only second to Amsterdam’s.

However, Livorno is unique among early modern trade circuits for its triple function as a regional port for Tuscany, a major Italian trade depôt, and a major commercial center for the entire Mediterranean. Additionally, while the majority of the Sephardim throughout Italy was involved in trade with the Balkans and the Levant, the Portuguese New Christians who had settled and reconverted predominantly in Livorno (especially in the 17th century), highly

²⁷³ Initially Jews in Early-Modern Tuscany did face some persecution—in 1567 Cosmo I de Medici, in seeking recognition as Chief Duke of Tuscany (title earned in 1670), cooperated with Bull *Dudum felicitis recordationis* that, in part, required that Jews wear a yellow badge and live in Guettos (for example, in Florence and Siena). Jews were mostly dependent on the Medici rulers for protection, such as in 1527 when Pisan Jews were forced to flee with the defeat of the Medicis (the Jews were allowed to reenter after 1548); Milano 1963, 212-285.

²⁷⁴ Toaff 1990, 19.

²⁷⁵ Other groups, such as the Armenians and Greeks were also given incentive to settle in Livorno.

²⁷⁶ This was granted also to settlers in Pisa.

²⁷⁷ Campagnano 2007, 56; Israel 2002, 64.

²⁷⁸ Lehmann 2005.

contributed the city's development as one of the most important intermediate ports between Iberian and Mediterranean trade circuits.

From a cultural standpoint, a distinctive “Portuguese” identity managed to persist for three reasons: Firstly, the legal status of New Christians who reconverted to Judaism was dealt with most directly in Livorno, where explicit protection against the Inquisition remained city policy for this period. Although New Christian settlement in the Italian Peninsula had been underway from even before 1492, the growth of the Livornese Jewish population occurs together with an upswing in persecution by the Portuguese Inquisition in the 1640s. Secondly, Livorno was a region where the so-called *levantini* were relatively absent, thereby preventing the immediate absorption of the Portuguese community into the larger communities of the Italian Sephardim that spoke Judeo-Spanish.²⁷⁹ Lastly, from the perspective of the Genoese and Florentine firms involved in trade between the Italian Peninsula and Spain, the mobilized Portuguese New Christians-turned-Jews—along with their long-standing networks—were essential in gaining access to circuits originating in the Iberian Peninsula. While such firms were established in other Italian cities (especially in Venice), the Livornese community's affirmation of its Portuguese identity facilitated commerce operating within Portuguese circuits.²⁸⁰ Moreover, there seems to have been a preference on the part of some merchants (particularly Jews from northwestern Europe trading with Lisbon) to trade exclusively with other Jews. While certainly religious solidarity was at play, this also prevented the risk of any connection to New Christians who could be accused and arrested for judaizing.²⁸¹

Therefore, as a natural consequence of Livorno's socioeconomic position within the Mediterranean trade and the networks of the *nação portuguesa*, the Portuguese language was employed by the community up until the later half of the 18th century, and is one of the major features that sets this center of Luso-Sephardic Jewry apart from the Jewish Portuguese settlement throughout the Mediterranean. The Portuguese language, aside from being a spoken idiom, was used by the *Nazione Ebraica di Livorno* in community ordinances, decrees, and occasionally in sermons until 1673,²⁸² although in terms of formal publishing, we find no

²⁷⁹ Livorno and Amsterdam are also similar in this way, as a variety of Portuguese remained the language of each community by the very absence of other Sephardic groups in the area.

²⁸⁰ Israel 2002, 71; cf. Yogev, 30-33.

²⁸¹ If captured by the Inquisition, all goods would be confiscated. Further evidence comes from records indicating the absence of any New Christian trading group that was not also linked to Jews; Trivellato 2002; Israel 2002.

²⁸² Issued until 1677. Between 1673 and 1677, records were taken in (Judeo-)Spanish.

Portuguese publications coming from the city.²⁸³ Additionally, the persistence of Portuguese in Livorno (about a century after 1673) is shorter, for example, to Amsterdam, and can be explained with the preexistence of Jewish communities in the Italian Peninsula at the time of the initial arrival of Portuguese émigrés. While in northwestern Europe Jews had been mostly absent since the Middle Ages, not only had a Jewish community existed in the Italian Peninsula since Roman times, but their language—Italian—was also very similar to Portuguese (and Castilian), and therefore more easily adopted. Evidence of the linguistic permeability of the Livornese Jewish community remains in what is known as *bagito*, a mixed language of Castilian, Portuguese, Italian, Hebrew, and Aramaic elements, which continued to be used into the 20th century.²⁸⁴ Moreover, already in documents considered to have been written in a variety of Portuguese from the 16th to the 18th century, ample Italian and Castilian borrowings are observed. According to Giuseppe Tavani, however, the Portuguese spoken in Livorno represents, for the most part, a variant of contemporary Portuguese, most notable for its morphological deviations, few phonetic/orthographic alternations, and Italian and Castilian lexical inclusions.²⁸⁵ Below is a more in-depth analysis of the linguistic variety seen in 16th and 18th century Jewish Portuguese.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Kayserling 1971; Tavani 1959, 1960.

²⁸⁴ Cf. Campagnano 2007, “O bagito,” pg. 161; Guido Bedarida suggests the etymology of this term come from Castilian *bajo* [low, short] (in the 16th-17th century still pronounced as /j/), in reference to the low register associated with this language; Fiorentino 2007/2008, 65.

²⁸⁵ Tavani 1959

²⁸⁶ The majority of examples are taken from the work of Giuseppe Tavani (1924-Roma, Università della Sapienza), particularly *Appunti sul giudeo-portoghese di Livorno* (1959), and *Di alcune particolarità morfologiche e sintattiche del giudeo-portoghese di Livorno* (1960). [The archives of the Jewish community had not yet been catalogued at the time of Tavani’s studies, and so he refers to them by an initial line of text. Correlating these titles to current catalogue numbers has yet to be completed].

Sources for Tavani

I) *Em nome de Deus / bendito amen. / Capitulaçoems e ordenanças / para o governo da S. Irmandade de / [Bikur Holim] / fundada nesta cidade de Liorne / no anno 5502 / Revistas, e aprovadas dos muy Ulustres Senhores / do Governo. / Em LAorne / Neste anno 5503 na Imprensa de Abraham de Raphael Meldola / con licencia dos Superiores* [1743, pg. 62].

II) *Em nome / de Deus / Capitulacoems / e / ordenanças / do modo que se deve governar / a Hébra' / De cazar Orfas, e Donzélas, Fundada nesta Cidade / de Liorne o ano 5404. / Nuova- mente Reformadas, e establecidas pèllos mui / Ulustres Senhores / Raphael de Moseh de Faro / Moseh de Abram Franco / Moseh Israel Enriquez / Isahc de Moseh Attias / David de Abram Sulema / Moseh do S. Emanuel Ergas / a dito effetto / Deputados / em Companhia do / S. Moseh de Raphael Ergas / Ultimamente passado a melhor vida, aprovadas, e / publicadas na Junta Jeral de dita Hebrà / deste Ano 5487 [s. 1., 1727, pg. 74].*

III) Deliberations of the “Parnassim” in granting the title “haham” to Malahi Accoen, 18 September 1731 (in appendix a A. Lattes-A. Toaff, *Jewish Studies of Livorno in the 18th century*, Livorno 1909, pg. 91-92).

IV) *Decreto de los Senores del Màhamad*, included in a book of capitulations written in Castilian and printed in Livorno in 1706.

Phonetic/Orthographic Variation

Unlike in previous analyses, the phonetic and orthographic variation in records from the 16th through 18th century Jewish Community in Livorno does not significantly distinguish this variety of Jewish Portuguese. In general it can be said that many archaic graphic elements from the 16th century can still be seen in 18th century documents, although, as has been shown, such archaic features are also observable in other Jewish Portuguese documents from across the *nação portuguesa*, as well as in contemporary Iberian Portuguese documents themselves. Below is a list and brief discussion of all major variation observed in the Jewish variety of Portuguese in Livorno.

The orthography of nasal vowels is highly variable and prone to Italian influence. The standard suffix -ão is more often written without the tilde diacritic, or represented as -am, such as in *nam, tam, moderacam, mauns*, etc.²⁸⁷ The nasal diphthong /ẽi/ is often written as -ein/eim or sometimes simply as -im/in (as in *dereim, oiverein, florin, tiverim*, etc.),²⁸⁸ and /õe/ occurs more or less regularly as -oims/oin(s) (as in *razoims, capitolaçoims, dispoin*).²⁸⁹

Non-nasal vowel representations are less diverse than in other centers of the Luso-Sephardim. The most abundant examples are: /ə/ in protonic initial position being represented as i-, which is also an aspect of Old Portuguese; the transformation of /i/ > /e/ when in an initial syllable position, an internal protonic position, an initial nasal position, or as an -ir verb suffix (such as *dezer, oreginal, emvestida, admeter, sucomber*, etc. as well as some reverse examples, as in *ninhum, piquenos*, etc.).²⁹⁰ There are also more minor cases of e>o, and u>o, as well as a > e transformations (as in *embolser, rezoems*),²⁹¹ similar to the a-e-i vowel alternations documented by Pedro da Silva Germano in the Amsterdam and Hamburg Portuguese

V) Manuscript on the deliberations of the Livorno community concerning the forced baptism of a Jewish child in 1776 in Pisa.

VI) Manuscript letter of the “Parnassim” of Livorno, 14 February 1766.

VII) Pieces of regulation from “Talmud Torà” of Livorno and a testament, reported by G. Sonnino, *Il “Talmud Torà” di Livorno* in “La Rassegna Mensile di Israel,” X (1935), pg. 183-9.

²⁸⁷ não, tão, moderação (II), mãos (I 18; II 12, 23)

²⁸⁸ derem (II 32), ouverem (II 69), florem (VI), tiverem (II 69).

²⁸⁹ razões (I 1), capitulações (I 9), dispõe (II 47).

²⁹⁰ dizer (I 39; passim), original (I 4), investida (I 16), admitir (I 47; II 10, 35, 42), sucumbir (I 30); nenhum (II 40), pequenos (II 73).

²⁹¹ embolsar (I 27), razões (II 16).

communities (Chapter 2).²⁹² Diphthongs from Castilian loans are typically reduced, as in /ie/ to /e/ (*siguiente*, *izquierda*, etc.),²⁹³ whereas diphthongizations of /a/ and /e/ occur in tonic positions (*aigiam*, *seigia*, *prevejiam*, etc.).²⁹⁴ Additionally, the final digraph *ia* transforms to *a* in the suffix -ancia/encia as -ança/ença, and is most likely due to Italian influence. Interestingly, there is also the recurrence of the *ou* and *oi/y* alteration, seen identically in Iberian Portuguese and northwestern Jewish Portuguese varieties (some examples include *doitor*, *oibesse*, etc.).²⁹⁵ Tavani explains that this particular confusion may be due to incomplete transition to Portuguese by Spanish exiles in Portugal, also referring to Gil Vicente's portrayal of New Christians speaking Castilian within Portuguese language plays. However, I have shown in other sections, *ou-oi/y* alternation is a phonetic feature seen throughout Jewish Portuguese varieties as well as in other Iberian Portuguese dialects. Thus it seems that it is likelier to be a vestigial feature associated with the sociolect to which the Jews were part while still in Portugal.

When it comes to the variation of consonants, Livornese Portuguese varies only very slightly from standard Portuguese, and most instances of such variation can be attributed to Castilian and Italian influences. The labial consonant /b/ seems to have caused some confusion with /v/ (with both sometimes occurring in the same text), for example: *devito*, *receuido*, *emvolsarse*, *prohiuicaò*, *cavais*, *saver*, *sovver*, *savios*, *libro*, *libre*, *houvesse*, etc.²⁹⁶ In addition, /b/ is assimilated when paired with /m/, /r/, /t/, /s/ (such as in *summiçaò*, *oter*, *ostante*, etc.²⁹⁷), and /ks/ assimilated to /s/ (as in *correcaò*, *elecaò*).²⁹⁸ In some cases, consonants that have undergone assimilation or deletion in standard Portuguese, are restored as in *subsessivamente*, *asumpto*, etc.,²⁹⁹ and the *h* in *hum*, *hua*, *ther*, *methodo*, *authoridade*, etc.³⁰⁰ This may have occurred consciously for etymological reasons in an attempt to elevate the learned status of a particular text, as has been documented to have been the case in other Luso-Sephardic exile communities (such as Amsterdam). Other consonantal variation includes the metathesis of *r*,

²⁹² Germano 1969.

²⁹³ *siguiente* (II 7, 15, 27, 47) *izquierda* (I 28).

²⁹⁴ *hayan* (II 12, 14); *seja* (II 9, 10, 14, 15, 25) *prevejiam* (II 5).

²⁹⁵ *doutor* (I 16), *houvesse* (VI).

²⁹⁶ Compare to the Italian 'debito' (I. 25, 40, 57, 59) [still in text II *debito* e *divida* are also found], *recibido* (I 40), *envolverse* (I 44), *proibição* (I 60), *cavais* (II 5), *saber* (II 11, 68.), *souber* (II 23), *sabios* (VII), *livro* (passim), *libre* (II), *houvesse* (VI).

²⁹⁷ *sumiçaõ* (I 4), *obter* (VI passim), *obstante* (II 10).

²⁹⁸ This also a differentiating feature between present-day European and Brazilian Portuguese orthography and pronunciation, ex: *acção* vs. *ação*.

²⁹⁹ *sucessivamente* (I 9), *asunto* (I 10, 12).

especially with the prefix pre- changing to per- (*presistindo*, *premisso*, etc.),³⁰¹ and the Italian-influenced transformation of *d* to *t*, as in *dificultade*, *facultade*, respectively.³⁰² Finally, spirant representation is likewise as varied as seen in northwestern Europe: *z*, *s*, and *ss* correspond to standard *c^{e/i}/ç* (*faza* [I 16], *prezenza* [I 24], *presso* [I 12], *establesido* [II 16], etc.), *z* is often substituted for *s* between vowels to better reflect pronunciation (*caza* [I 13], etc.), and *x* is replaced by *z*, *s*, or *ss* (*ezcluem* [II 7], etc.).

Morphological Variation

The most notable feature of the Portuguese spoken by the Jews of Livorno is the degree of morphological variation and innovation that was most likely due to presence of other Romance languages, such as Castilian, and, most prominently, Italian.

On a lexical level, many adverbs, conjunctions and prepositions from Castilian and Italian were introduced as either calques or loans: *entonces* [Cast.-II 45], *nada de menos* (It. nulladimeno) [I 16, II 12], *nao de menos* (It. nondimeno) [I 13, 20, II 25], *a/em directura* (It. addirittura) [I 28, 43, 46], *justa apunto* (It.-giustappunto) [I 48], *sic(c)omo* (It. siccome) [I 14, II 20, V, VI], *sotto* (It. sotto) [II 7, 9, V], *però/pero* (It. or Cast.) [I, II, III]; *a fim que* (It. affinché) [I 4, 20, 22, 24, 30, 36, II 16, 18, 24]. Additionally, we can observe the widespread usage of *El Dio*, a modified Castilian loan perceived to better reflect Jewish monotheism, and attested both among Jews (and crypto-Jews) in Portugal, and in the Portuguese diaspora. Other minor morphological variation can be seen in alternate gender assignments for particular nouns, due either to Castilian or Italian influence (as in the case of: *o ordem* [masculine in It. & Cast. II 30], *o paragem* [I 36], *a sangue* [masculine in Cast. I 38], etc.).³⁰³ Finally, the relative adjective *cujo* (also written *cuyo*, or *cuio*), is used as a subject pronoun, an archaic feature found also in contemporary documents³⁰⁴ (...*e dispois farà tantas cedolas quantos saò os haberim e benefactores de embolsarse, em cuias cedolas nao porà nome*... [I 27]), and similarly *tudo* is used as a pronoun for *todo* (...*sortear da bolsa de todos os haberim dous cada vernes*... [I 26]).

³⁰⁰ Sometimes the an initial 'h' is deleted from the standard form. Ex: *ora*, *ouver*, *aver*.

³⁰¹ *persistindo* (I 15, 47), *permiso* (I 33, 35).

³⁰² *dificuldade* (II 13), *faculdade* (II 38).

³⁰³ For a more comprehensive list see Tavani 1959 & 1960.

³⁰⁴ Cf. Azevedo 2005, 132.

Livornese Jewish Portuguese also shows morphological variation on an inflectional level, seen in verbal forms and usages. Sometimes variation is simply orthographic, as in the retention of -r in suffixed atonic pronouns occurs (*registrarlos* [II 71] etc.), due most likely to the Castilian and Italian influence. Personal infinitives are also redundantly employed, as in *...afim que com os dous que ficao no encargo possam serem instruidos...*[I. 20]). Finally, the auxiliary usage of the verbs ‘haver’ and ‘ser’ are maintained in place of the more standard ‘ter’³⁰⁵ and ‘estar.’ The verb ‘haver’ is also used as a composite auxiliary, as in “there is/are”, as well as to denote the periphrastic future construct (*...ordenamos, que naó possa haver neste K. K. outra Hebrà para cazar Orfas...*[II. 7 e IV], and *...e naò avendo tantos compradores quantos fossem os numeros vacantes...*[I 38]). Interestingly, ‘ser’ is also used regularly where 18th century standard Portuguese would use ‘estar,’³⁰⁶ probably due to contact with Italian (*seraò entregadas* [I 26], *sendo juntos* [II 7], *sendo casado* [II 10], *sendo solteiro, foi elegido* (II 15 e 17), *seram obrigados* (II 35).

Syntactic Variation

In Tavani’s analyses of Portuguese in Livorno he does not single out any examples of alternate syntax, and instead, considers the following two examples as morphological variation. The first example involves the usage of the relative pronoun ‘que,’ which more usually occurs irregularly and without an article in Tavani’s corpus (*...no discurso do tempo que [instead of ‘em que’] estiveraò em pratica e observanza...*[I 10], and *...estando, ou avendo estado, em lugares que [instead of ‘em que,’ or ‘onde’] publicamente se possa celebrar...*[II 40]). Also, ‘que’ is sometimes omitted when used as a subject in clear reference to the preceding clause (*...dando providenza aos inconvenientes [que] se seguiriaò no discurso do tempo...* [I. 10]).

The second major example of syntactic variation is the use of ‘ficar’ (in place of ‘ser’) in formation of the passive clause. This is most likely due to the influence of the Castilian ‘quedar’ (itself sometimes used in Livornese Portuguese texts) to form the passive structure (‘ficar’/‘quedar’ + a past participle). For example: *...no discurso do tempo que ficou formada e*

³⁰⁵ Used only to express possession.

³⁰⁶ Also used, in some cases, in passive constructs. Ex: *esteja* (I 45), *estivesse yà naçido* (II 37).

*erigida està Hebrà...[I 3], ...da que ficaraò aprovadas e confirmadas...[I 4], ...e girado o partido ficoù aprovado a plenos votos...[I 5].*³⁰⁷

Lexical Variation and Borrowings³⁰⁸

Lexical features that do not reflect standard Portuguese are Castilian and, more often, Italian loans that have been adapted to Portuguese orthography and pronunciation. Italian-based vocabulary tends to focus almost exclusively on administrative and commercial subjects, for example: *devieto* (Port. *proibição*, It. *divieto*-prohibition), *desdeta* (It. *disdetta*-act of rescinding a contract), *femar* or *fimar* (Port. *assinar*, It. *firmare*-to sign), *devito* or *debido* (Port. *divina*, It. *debito*), *partido* (It. *partito*-assembly deliberations), *provedimento* (Port. *providência*, It. *provvedimento*-providence), etc. Other Italian loans of more common usage include: *estatismo* (It. *stanzino*-closet), *navadas* (It. *navate*-aisled), *criatura* (Port. *criança*, It. *creatura*-child, ‘creature’), *ragasses* (Port. *rapazes*, It. *ragazzi*-boys, children) etc.

The most interesting case of Castilian lexicon entering the Portuguese of Livorno is the use Castilian days of the week, adopted to Portuguese phonetics, such as *Martes* (Port. *terça-feira*-Tuesday), *Mercóles* (Port. *quarta-feira*, Cast. *miércoles*-Wednesday), *Joves* (Port. *quinta-feira*, Cast. *Jueves*-Thursday, and *Vernes* (Port. *sexta-feira*, Cast. *viernes*-Friday).³⁰⁹ Other Castilian lexicon includes: *testigos* (witnesses), *milagres* (witnesses), *poseedores* (bearers, holders), *deuda* and *deudores* (debt and debtors), *alboroto* (Port. *alvoroço*-in the sense of ‘disorder and confusion’), *empremta* or *emprenta* (Cast. *imprenta*-imprint), *bolver* (Port. *voltar*, Cast. *Volver*-return), *silha* (chair), etc.

Conclusion

While the linguistic variation of the Livornese Luso-Sephardic community between the 16th and the 18th century shows clear deviations from standard norms, for the most part the Portuguese used by the community highly resembled the language present in contemporary

³⁰⁷ ‘*De*’ is also used in place of ‘*por*’ for some passive constructs (ex.: I 44).

³⁰⁸ Tavani 1960b.

³⁰⁹ Monday is nowhere attested in any of the Portuguese texts. Saturday and Sunday are identical in Castilian and Portuguese, *sábado* and *domingo*, respectively.

Iberia.³¹⁰ As this is also the case in other major Portuguese Jewish centers, such as Amsterdam, Hamburg, and London, the situation in Livorno is unique for its community's close contact with the Italian language. The fact that the majority of lexical inclusions generally retain their Italian phonetics and in terms of technical usage, are mostly administrative terms, shows to what extent the Livornese Jews must have participated in mainstream society and institutions. Moreover, the morphological variations due to Italian influence, as well as the many borrowed Italian conjunctions and prepositions, indicate that Italian was a language widely spoken and utilized by the Jewish community.

A unified study of Portuguese Jews in Ottoman lands and in Italian Peninsula is justified not only by the history of the Portuguese language among these communities, but also by the role language played shaping Sephardic identity in the eastern Mediterranean. The use of either Castilian or Portuguese (and their varieties associated with each Jewish community), at times independent of the geographical origin of the speakers, reveals that kin affiliation within eastern networks developed per the Sephardi tradition linked to a particular trade circuit. Venice (Castilian and Judeo-Spanish-speaking) and Livorno ("Portuguese"-speaking), with their Balkan, Anatolian, and Levantine counterparts, stand as testaments to this complex linguistic dynamic, as the *ponentini* and *levantini* each came to speak the language of their economic partners. What started as a legal distinction evolved into two distinctive sociological categories, which came to operate in their own separate languages as a means to identify first with kinsmen in trade, and second with their coreligionists.

³¹⁰ Tavani 1659a, 1959b, 1960.

CH 4: PAST THE HORIZON

Linguistic Usage and Identity Reinvented in Colonial Empires

Perhaps the greatest legacy of Portuguese history is the kingdom's spearheading European expansion into overseas territories. By the end of the 16th century, the Portuguese had established trading enclaves in nearly every corner of the globe—western and eastern Africa, the Persian Gulf, India, the Far East, and Brazil. Over the course of the next five centuries, the Portuguese colonial system emerged, gradually attracting settlers and merchants from Iberia and beyond. Along these routes there evolved a network of exiled Portuguese Jewish and New Christian³¹¹ merchants that came either directly from Portugal, or from other location in the Luso-Sephardic diaspora. These groups stretched the circuits of the *nação portuguesa* across five continents, and pioneered many essential commercial links between European colonial possessions and western Europe and the Mediterranean. Furthermore, after the wane of Portuguese overseas dominance by the late 17th century, many Portuguese Jewish communities broadened the *nação* to encompass Dutch, Spanish, and English routes, especially in the New World.

Within this system, a key advantage of the Portuguese Jewish traders operating in this period was their linguistic skills, instilled by their displacement. This permitted a high degree of cross-cultural interaction that, which from a linguistic perspective, put in contact a mosaic of languages with the Portuguese spoken by the Luso-Sephardim. Moreover, the advantages of maintaining a kin-based network, in association with trade and the Jewish religion, led to the persistence of the Portuguese language in specific colonial centers, as an extension of a socially pragmatic binding force among the entire *nação portuguesa*.

This chapter will analyze the minor and few linguistic variations in the Portuguese spoken by Jewish communities overseas, and will take the important issue of how and why the language was either short-lived (such as in Africa, and in British territories), assimilated (such as in Curaçao, and Suriname), or simply untelling of a particular Jewish influence (such as in Brazil, India, and the Spanish Americas). Generally speaking, it is difficult to assess the historical usage of Portuguese among Jews across European colonies, as these groups were either in direct contact with a diaspora location in Europe (and so influenced linguistically), or under immense

³¹¹ With various crypto-Jewish inclinations; cf. "Jews and Crypto-Jews in the Atlantic World System, 1500-1800" by Benjamin Israel in Kagan 2009.

pressure from either the Spanish or Portuguese Inquisition to remain inconspicuous. Likewise, the often-ambiguous “Jewish” identity of New Christians (such as in Brazil) makes correlating linguistic variation with a Jewish heritage methodologically precarious. For this reason, only the Portuguese used by communities clearly referred to as Jewish will be analyzed.³¹² It will also be suggested, on the grounds of historical evidence, that further studies should compare linguistic variation typical of Portuguese Jewish communities with present-day creoles in former contact with the Luso-Sephardim, especially in former African and Indian outposts.

In and Out of Africa

Portuguese Jewish settlements on the African continent are generally characterized as having been temporary and remote. Their locations were often removed from Inquisitorial activities, and established along the Petite Côte (Cacheu, Porto d’Ale, Joal, etc.), Cape Verde Islands, São Tomé, and the coast between Kongo and Loango. These communities consisted of a small group of Luso-Sephardic men involved in the sugar, dye-wood, gold, ivory, hides, silver and slave trade,³¹³ who began arriving in the late 16th century, and mostly left by the 1620s, to return in their majority to Amsterdam.³¹⁴ While Dutch, Flemish, and German traders were also present alongside Portuguese Jewish traders, cross-cultural interaction was atypically restricted in west African trade, and only a minority of notarial contracts refer to dealings between the different groups.³¹⁵

This exclusivity factored into both the maintenance of the Luso-Sephardic kin-based network, as well as the development of partnerships with local African rulers who, in many cases, came to prefer the trust of Jewish merchants to the more belligerent Catholic and

³¹² As opposed to “crypto-Jewish” or “judaizing New Christians.”; For a discussion on “Marrano Ibero-Romance: Classification and Research Tasks” by Paul Wexler 1982. The language of some Brazilian New Christian writers with suspected crypto-Jewish affiliations should also be studied, and include: Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão (author of *Diálogos das Grandezas do Brasil*), Bento Teixeira (poet whose *Prosopopéia* introduced the Baroque movement to the New World), and Padre António Vieira (Jesuit writer who, at time, represents the Marranos and Indians); Simms 2007.

³¹³ Sephardim from Amsterdam were especially involved in trade with western Africa. Of the total Dutch percentage of trade insurance issued to traders in the region, a total of 70%, 21% was backed by the Dutch Sephardim. Additionally, 65% of the insurance issued by the Dutch was to ensure these Jewish traders; Silva 2011, 275, 315-316.

³¹⁴ Mark 2011, 159.

³¹⁵ Precisely 20%, the remaining 80% of documents refer to internal group operations; Silva 2011, 318; Roitman 2009.

Protestant traders. In addition, the absence of the Inquisition allowed for the more-or-less outward expression of a Jewish identity in Portuguese domains. According to records from a 1612 visitation organized by the Portuguese Holy Office to the Petite Côte, it was reported that nearly all the residents of Port d'Ale were of Jewish origin,³¹⁶ and that the Dutch Rabbi Jacob Peregrino was sent to the community to serve as leader of an informal congregation of between 15 to 24 Jewish households (Jewish men, converted African slaves, and mistresses) settled between Joal and Porto d'Ale.³¹⁷ The exiled Jewish community in São Tomé also briefly established in 1552 when the island was open to general settlement. However, with the arrival of the Dutch and French privateers in the 17th century, most of the Jewish community migrated to Brazil where they helped establish some of the first major sugar plantations.³¹⁸ In other centers, such as Angola and Upper Guinea, Jewish traders, especially involved in the slave trade, likewise settled temporarily, though their specific presence in relation to religion is more poorly documented.³¹⁹

The coexistence of the Jewish Portuguese traders with their African slaves and consorts, although brief, led to a certain cultural diffusion whose linguistic components has still been mostly unexplored. There are cases such as that of Diogo Dias Querido, an Amsterdam Jew who was involved in contraband trade between western African and Dutch Brazil, and who chose to educate his African slaves in Portuguese and Dutch, converting and instructing them in Judaism.³²⁰ There are even some accounts of Jewish Portuguese men remaining in western Africa (such as Jacob de Souza), as well as mulatto children being brought back to Amsterdam to live with their fathers.³²¹ Language usage and identity has yet to be studied for such incidents. However, due to the ephemeral and predominately Dutch character of the Luso-Sephardic communities, it is unlikely that a significant variety of Jewish Portuguese in west African settlements emerged between the late 16th and the early 17th century. Therefore, a survey of linguistic variation in documents written by such Jewish settlers would better belong in the analysis of the language in northwestern centers, such as Amsterdam and Hamburg. Nonetheless, historical evidence suggests that present day Portuguese-based African creoles, removed from

³¹⁶ Mark 2004.

³¹⁷ Mark 2011, 33, 182.

³¹⁸ Chevalier 1910.

³¹⁹ Cf. Washabaugh 1982; Newson 2012.

³²⁰ Wiznitzer 1960, 46; See also ft. 5 about The Oppenheim Collection of the American Jewish Historical Society, New York.

their Jewish-European source, could potentially offer novel examples of how the Portuguese spoken by the Luso-Sephardim was instilled over subsequent generations into African society. While a linguistic analysis of Portuguese creoles is beyond the scope of this study, further research should also address the question as to what extent the variety of Portuguese spoken by Jewish settlers affected the Luso-African languages and the creoles that emerged.³²² Input for such variation may include the language of the late-15th-century Jewish children deported to São Tomé (and their mixing with local populations³²³), Dutch varieties of Jewish Portuguese (especially along the Petite Côte), and, after the 17th century, whatever commercial interaction occurred between New World Sephardim and indigenous Africans who remained on the continent.

In da Gama's Wake

The Portuguese Jews and New Christians made their way to locations throughout Asia and the Indian Ocean following Vasco da Gama's discovery of a sea-born route to India in 1498. Like many of their compatriots, many of these Luso-Sephardim were fleeing the Portuguese Inquisition,³²⁴ and looking to establish or conduct trade throughout the generally more tolerant territories in Portuguese Asia—from Nagasaki, Manila, Macau, Malacca, Cochin, Goa, Hormuz, and other locations. Due to the local variation in cultures, politics, languages and policies of toleration, the situation of the Portuguese Jews who settled in Asia will be discussed regionally, focusing on the most representative areas of linguistic evidence: the Persian Gulf and India. Similar to what we see in Africa, scarce linguistic documentation remains, especially for what concerns a distinct Jewish variety of Portuguese. Moreover, many communities with a greater Portuguese administrative presence were compelled to continue living publicly as New Christian, and so the establishment of an open Jewish community remained too great a risk for many settlements. However, a sociological context in viewing multilingualism and the survival of Portuguese (in whatever form) in many Asian Jewish communities can shed some light on how a Luso-Sephardic identity was engendered even in the furthest reaches of the *nação portuguesa*.

³²¹ Such as the the May 4,1647 entry in the Book of Beth Haim in Amsterdam; Mark 2011 , 182-183.

³²² Cf. Berry 1971; Holm 1989.

³²³ Garfield 1990.

The Persian Gulf

Portuguese Jewish outposts in the Persian Gulf served mostly as trade intermediaries between east African and Indian ports as a junction point between overland Middle Eastern routes and the Indian Ocean. The first of these settlements lasted for a little over a century on the island of Hormuz, which was conquered in 1507 by the Portuguese Afonso de Albuquerque (the first viceroy of India). Many New Christians arrived with the newly installed Portuguese, and, having come under a reduced degree of surveillance, eventually practiced the Jewish religion openly.³²⁵ In addition to being involved in the trade of goods, many Portuguese Jews on Hormuz served as moneylenders, navigational guides, interpreters, and advisors to the Portuguese in the region. At its height, the community was reported to consist of 150 households by a Portuguese traveller in Hormuz between 1593-1591, and by 1606, with a population already in decline, sources indicate an estimate of about 200 “Hebrews.”³²⁶ Eventually, the Jews were forced to leave along with the Portuguese, after a joint Persian-English takeover in 1622. Many of the Luso-Sephardim dispersed primarily to Muslim-ruled Kung (near Bandar Abbas on the mainland) and other locations around the Indian Ocean,³²⁷ from where they continued to participate as merchants in trade.

While the majority of historical and linguistic evidence for these settlements centered around Hormuz comes from Jesuit and other outside sources, some conclusions can be drawn about the Portuguese spoken among the Jews in the region. The Dutch Jesuit missionary Gaspar Barzaeus, who stayed in Hormuz between 1549-1551, describes the community as a “melting pot” of cultures, and states that among the Jews there were “Chaldaic” Jews, as well as those newly arrived from Spain and Portugal.³²⁸ He also mentions that these communities were led by the Rabbis Solomão and Joseph, who were of Spanish origin but had travelled to the island from Portugal via Venice. In addition, he mentions that the Jews frequently journeyed between Hormuz and India, and were involved in the silk trade through Brusa in Anatolia.

³²⁴ Although a separate Tribunal was established in Goa in 1560, and presided over all Portuguese processions east of the Cape of Good Hope.

³²⁵ At the time of arrival, all Portuguese Jews had been declared New Christians (1497), though the Portuguese Inquisition did not begin until 1536.

³²⁶ Teixeira 1901, 252; *A Chronicle of the Carmelites...* 1939, vol. II, pg. 1040-1041.

³²⁷ Fischel 1950.

³²⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, ft. 11 where the author references *Documenta Indica*, 504, 599.

What we can gather from this account is that the same cultural flow seen in the European Luso-Sephardic diaspora extended its reaches to even the most remote locations of the *nação portuguesa*. These gulf communities likely spoke the language of their overlords and some trade partners (that is, Portuguese), while also maintaining a certain knowledge of (Judeo-)Spanish—both for kin-based religious priorities (the Rabbis themselves were of Spanish origin and, especially if initially from Venice, were educated in terms of cosmopolitan “Sephardism”) and to conduct trade overland from Anatolia (where the Sephardim and other Jewish groups eventually came to speak Judeo-Spanish).³²⁹ However, there is substantial lack of remaining documents from members of the communities themselves. This can also be added to the fact that these settlers lived and conducted trade among a milieu of cultures and languages. It is thus not surprising that these Luso-Sephardim came to assimilate with local groups, especially after 1622, or that they became members of other Portuguese settlements in India.

India

The history of Jews in India predates the arrival of the Portuguese in 1498. However with the expansion of Portuguese *feitorias* along the west coast of the subcontinent, various Portuguese Jewish and New Christian communities came to establish themselves in pursuit of economic opportunities and freedom from the Inquisition. As early as the arrival of Vasco da Gama in India, there is mention in Portuguese records of Jews in the service of the Portuguese conquerors that served as messengers, trade agents, pilots, and interpreters.³³⁰ Here will be discussed the linguistic usage and identity of the Jews of Cochin, Goa and Surat, the largest and most influential Portuguese Jewish settlements in Portuguese India. While many works and some correspondences written by New Christians (including those suspected of being crypto-Jews) exist, they provide little to this study as their official character shows minor colloquial usage, and above all they would have been intended to conceal any sort of Jewish background.³³¹

³²⁹ Cf. Ch. 3.

³³⁰ Fischel 1956; Mostly notable among them is Gaspar da Gama, a Jewish slave brought to India who served as the official translator to Portuguese exploration in the East and Brazil; cf. Abrahams 1896.

³³¹ Further studies may wish to focus on the linguistic usage in such works as Garcia de Orta’s *Colóquios dos simples e drogas he cousas medicinais da Índia* (1563), who was most likely a practicing crypto-Jews. For New Christian letters see also: Pissurlencar 1952, 551-556.

Regarding the Sephardim in India specifically, P. Van Caerden in 1606 indicates that in Goa there was more than one synagogue where Jews who originated from Palestine practiced freely, and both he and J. A. Mendelslo (in 1639) describe the community as speaking Castilian.³³² The Dutch traveller Van Linschoten in 1548 also mentions that the Jews in Surat originated in Palestine and must have been refugees of the Spanish expulsion.³³³ While it is difficult to determine the Luso-Sephardic origins of these settlers (that is, whether they migrated to Palestine from Spain or Portugal, and whether they were originally Portuguese speakers), at least after arriving in India these communities were in extensive contact with the *nação portuguesa* as traders throughout the Indian Ocean. This was true of Jewish merchants in Goa, which was the administrative center of the entire Portuguese Asian Empire. Even more so, traders were attracted to Surat, which was established as a *feitoria*³³⁴ in 1611, and came to draw brokers from throughout Europe and Asia, especially those involved in the jewel and diamond trade, such as many Portuguese merchants from Livorno and London.³³⁵ Thus, while it seems (Judeo-)Spanish was affiliated with the community itself, Portuguese must have been also spoken as a language for trade with both Portuguese magistrates and Jewish and non-Jewish merchants, although it is difficult to determine whether and to what extent the community's Portuguese was at all influenced by "Jewish" elements.

More importantly, however, the languages used by these Portuguese-Indian Jewish settlements extend our understanding of sociolinguistic identity in the *nação*, as Judeo-Spanish is shown to be a viable language of community within Portuguese Asian networks. Moreover, we can interpret that ethnolinguistic exchange occurred on a global scale among Portuguese and Spanish exiles, as, for example, in the case of the Edward Ferdinand. This 17th-century England-based Sephardic merchant was involved in the Surat diamond trade, and engaged in transactions among the London, Venice, and Livorno Sephardic Jewish communities.³³⁶ Many similar cases have been established, and as we have already been shown in other regions, the Luso-Sephardic communities in these European ports employed either Portuguese or Castilian in commercial transactions. Therefore, in reference to the jewel trade in India specifically, the sociolinguistic

³³² Caerden 1702, pg. 600-661; Mandelslo 1669, vol II, 107.

³³³ Mandelbaum 1939, ft. 16.

³³⁴ For example: José Cohen in 1653 and Moses Tobias in 1728, were made directors of the *feitoria*, and between 1714-1720, the New Christian João Gomes Phebos was a major agent in local trade; Fischel 1956.

³³⁵ Cf. Trivellato 2000, 2009.

³³⁶ Fischel 1956.

principle characteristic of the Luso-Sephardic circuits—using the language of one’s trading partners—seems to hold true even in the most remote regions of Jewish Portuguese networks.³³⁷

Assimilation and Rejection in the New World

The history of Judaism in the New World begins with the Luso-Sephardim in the 16th century and the discovery of what would become known as Brazil. Many New Christians and Jews from Portugal, and later the Netherlands and England, settled in colonial centers across the Portuguese captaincies, and gradually spread throughout the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, English, and (to a lesser extent) French colonies. Due to their wide-ranging family ties, geographic mobility, and multilingualism, the Luso-Sephardim soon rose to be one of the most successful trading groups in the New World as well as key participants in the Atlantic mercantile system.³³⁸

In former colonial trading centers that supported a Portuguese Jewish community, the language of the *nação portuguesa* has left its legacy in many cases in the languages and creoles still spoken in the region. While it is difficult to make a comparison with the varieties that arose in cities such as Amsterdam or Livorno, there is clear linguistic evidence in the Portuguese, Castilian, and mixed languages that were, or still are, Portuguese Jewish settlements. In addition, the sociolinguistic situation in many of these New World communities stands out for being less “Portuguese-oriented” in character, that is, many members were less conscientious about preserving a distinctive variety of spoken Portuguese. While this is partially due to the late 17th-century emergence of major trade empires that were based significantly less on cross-cultural trade, it also reflects a general trend in the New World for communities to associate less with their European past, and to look towards reestablishing an alternate Jewish continuity. Still, an affiliation with one’s Iberian origins reaches even into the present (such as in Curaçao), and is at times manifested in linguistic usage and identity throughout the western hemisphere.

What follows is a discussion of the Portuguese language in the communities of Portuguese Jews in Brazil, the Caribbean, the Spanish colonies, and North America. In addition to linguistic evidence, the sociolinguistic context in each region will be discussed in order to show how

³³⁷ Further studies should look for Portuguese elements that may indicate a Jewish influence in the modern languages Marathi (Goa), Malayalam (Cochin), and Gujarati (Surat); Wexler 2006, 1985.

³³⁸ Loker 1986.

language choice and kin-affiliation evolved across the Atlantic, for purposes of both trade and religion.

Brazil and Dutch Brazil

A Jewish history of Brazil begins during the first stages of colonial development in the 16th century. Although under Portuguese control openly practicing Judaism was prohibited, there were still many crypto-Jewish communities whose traditions have survived to the present day.³³⁹ Many New Christian early-comers from Portugal and western Africa were attracted by opportunities in the sugar industry, and moved their plantations to the Brazilian captaincies in the northeast region, such as Pernambuco. Initially, Brazil proved to be an ideal place of settlement for many New Christians and crypto-Jews, as it allowed them to remain within Portuguese domains while avoiding the worst of the Inquisition. In the almost three centuries of persecution, the Portuguese Inquisition never established a tribunal in Brazil, and only made a series of visitations to select regions.³⁴⁰ As a result, in the period between 1591 and 1763 just 400 judaizers were sent to Portugal for trial, and only 18 of them were condemned to death.³⁴¹ Despite low levels of surveillance, it seems that crypto-Judaism was not a major force among the initial New Christian settlers, and that there was even a relatively high degree of intermarriage between Old and New Christians.³⁴² Given the low concentration of crypto-Jews and the pressure to conceal their identity and/or assimilate, it is again difficult to single out documents reflective of Jewish speech. Moreover, since these individuals lived publicly as Catholics, their variety of Portuguese mostly likely resembled that of their Old Christian compatriots with whom they were in constant contact.³⁴³

The political circumstances of Brazilian Jewry, however, were vastly altered with the brief establishment of Dutch Brazil between 1630 and 1654 in the region of what is today, Maranhão to Sergipe.³⁴⁴ During this period, the Jewish Portuguese community in Amsterdam migrated in huge waves to the new territories—particularly to Recife and the Pernambuco region—attracted

³³⁹ Cf. Wachtel 2011.

³⁴⁰ 1591-1593-Bahia; 1593-1595-Pernambuco, 1618-1619-Salvador, Bahia; and 51 trials between 1729-1751.

³⁴¹ Boxer 1977, 270-271.

³⁴² Simms 2007.

³⁴³ However, further research should focus on New Christian speech in colonial Brazil before 1630.

by the tobacco, brazil wood, and mostly importantly, sugar trade. Under the more tolerant rule of the Dutch, the Luso-Sephardim were able to worship publicly, with the first synagogues in the western hemisphere establishing in Recife in 1636 (Tsur Israel) and in Maurícia between 1637 to 1649 (Magen Avraham). Daniel Swetschinski shows that these regions had such draw that, if we assume that all Jewish migrants to Dutch Brazil originated in Amsterdam, then an approximate third of the city's Luso-Sephardim came to resettle in Pernambuco. By the 1640s the Jewish community in Dutch Brazil reached between 850 and 1000 individuals, compared to 1,300 in Amsterdam.³⁴⁵ However, after the Portuguese recapture of Dutch territories in 1654, these communities almost entirely disappeared, with one record of 600 Jews returning to Amsterdam with Rabbi Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, the first rabbi in New World.³⁴⁶ Others spread to different locations throughout the Caribbean, especially Curaçao (which remained under Dutch control), and a minority stayed to live forcibly as Catholics under the reestablished Portuguese.

Given the strong ties to Dutch communities, and the relatively short endurance of the Dutch-Brazilian communities, it is difficult to speak about a Jewish variety of the Portuguese language unique to this time and region. Instead, it would seem that whatever variety of Portuguese that was spoken would fit into an analysis of linguistic usage and variation in the northwestern settlements of the *nação portuguesa* (Ch. 2). Nonetheless, Brazil is important to a discussion of the language history of the Luso-Sephardim, as the colony served as a major stepping-stone of entry into the commercial networks of the New World. Thus, most Jewish Portuguese settlers came from a speech background either heavily assimilated with standard usage, or reminiscent of varieties spoken in the Netherlands. Additionally, the reasons for which a Brazilian Jewish variety of Portuguese did not emerge serve as a control group within the analysis of linguistic usage in the *nação portuguesa*, as the Brazilian context demonstrates that, when let assimilate into a broader Lusophone society, a so-called “Jewish repertoire” significantly shrinks.

³⁴⁴ Salvador da Bahia, then the capital of Brazil, was captured in 1624 by the Dutch, but was returned the following year.

³⁴⁵ Swetschinski 2000, 83-84, 115.

³⁴⁶ Simms 2007.

The Caribbean and Guianas

Following the Dutch occupation of northern Brazil, many Luso-Sephardim dispersed across the Caribbean and other Dutch territories along the northern coast of South America (most notably in the Guianas). Mordechai Arbell notes significant Sephardic populations starting in the 16th century in the South American Caribbean and northern Atlantic Coast (Wild Coast), Martinique and Guadeloupe, Cayenne (French Guyana), Tobago, Pomeroun (Pauroma), Suriname, Curaçao, St. Eustatius, Barbados, Nevis, Jamaica, Tucacas, the Danish West Indies, and Haiti.³⁴⁷ This section will focus on the Dutch territories of Curaçao and Suriname, and the British islands of Barbados and Jamaica, as these are locations where the Luso-Sephardim were present in the largest numbers, allowing us to best comment on the linguistic situation in this region.

After 1654 many settlers from Dutch Brazil who wished to continue living publicly as Jews relocated to the nearby Dutch territories of Suriname and Curaçao. These communities played a pivotal role in the development of the sugar industry, and participated extensively in the exchange of slaves between western Africa and Spanish America.³⁴⁸ Here Portuguese Jewish communities thrived, and in most cases reaffirmed their Luso-Iberian claim to Judaism. Linguistic evidence remains in the form of certain prayers still recited in Portuguese (especially in Curaçao), and more interestingly, in the creoles still spoken in these regions by both Jews and non-Jews.

Starting with Suriname, for which there are fewer linguistic sources, the two creole languages on Suriname, Saramacan and Sranan, spoken mostly by the descendants of African slaves, seem to have retained certain elements of Portuguese Jewish speech. These creoles are believed to be Portuguese-based, though relexified to different extents during the English presence until 1667.³⁴⁹ Besides for hypothetical Portuguese interaction while still in Africa, the only other source of exposure to the language must have been from the Luso-Sephardic

³⁴⁷ Arbell 2002; Only one self-study of the *nação* was printed in French in the New World: *Essai historique sur la colonie de Suriname...avec l'histoire de la Nation Juive Portugaise et Allemande y établie, leurs privilèges, immunités, & franchises*. This work is representative of the Bayonne-Suriname connection, and how French supplanted Castilian as the language of culture of these Luso-Sephardim. On page vii, the local regents write: “Privés des connaissances nécessaires, forcés en quelque façon d’écrire dans une langue qui n’étant point la nôtre [en note: elle est la Portugaise & l’Espagnole] nous fut apprise moins par des principes que par une routine, peut-être même vicieuse.”; Beranrdini 2001, 262 & ft. 28.

³⁴⁸ Kagan 2009, Ch. 5 “*La Nación Among the Nations*.”

³⁴⁹ Due to the escape of African slaves, Saramaccan only partially relexified towards English, whereas Sranan did so more completely; Voorhoeve 1973.

plantation owners in Suriname. In fact, among the African slaves themselves, Saramaccan was called ‘Djutongo’, meaning “Jew Language.”³⁵⁰ Additionally, the acclaimed anthropologist Melville Herskovitz in the beginning of the 20th century notes some Jewish words in Sranan (though not in Saramaccan), including: *tréfu* (‘food taboo’-from Hebrew טָרָפָה-*trafa*), and *kaséria* (‘ritually clean’-Hebrew כָּשֵׁר-*kasher*).³⁵¹ While this a very small body of evidence, it allows us to infer 1. that a variety of Portuguese was mots likely spoken by the Jewish settlers as a daily language, 2. Jewish/Hebrew elements were incorporated into speech, and 3. elements of Jewish society, such as the laws of kashrut³⁵² at some level reached the African cultures that still persist in the region.³⁵³

Developing in parallel, Curaçao was the other major Dutch territory in the New World to host a significant Luso-Sephardic settlement. Between 1651 and 1652, the Dutch West India Company began drafting contracts with notable Jewish Portuguese entrepreneurs to establish a farming colony on the island, consisting mainly of families from northeastern Brazil and other Luso-Sephardic settlements. The first synagogue, Mikvé Israel, was established also in 1651, although migrations in large number to the island began after 1659.³⁵⁴ In contrast to Suriname, Portuguese linguistic evidence from the Jewish community in Curaçao is some of the most extensive in the New World. This is due both to the persistence of the Sephardic Jewish community on the island, and to the presence of the Ibero-Romance-based creole Papiamentu, still spoken as the vernacular language³⁵⁵ among the descendants of African slaves, Jews, and more recent Portuguese émigré laborers.

The majority of linguistic remnants from before 1775 are in epitaphs on tombstones, either in Portuguese, or Portuguese and Hebrew, with minor Castilian influence.³⁵⁶ Germán de Granda also notes that Castilian language publications were widespread in many of libraries of affluent

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁵¹ Herskovitz 1930.

³⁵² Jewish dietary laws.

³⁵³ Although the possibility of similar food taboos may have already been present in the source cultures of the African slaves, and these words from Judaism were simply reapplied semantically. Interestingly also, these Hebrew loans were not found present in Saramaccan, and shows that the diffusion of Jewish cultural elements into slave society must have been a slow process that required long-term contact, or occurred at a later stage in colonial development after the occurrence of a maroon population. One might also consider that maroon communities systematically “de-ludaized” their speech to break with their Jewish masters. Further research should address such questions.

³⁵⁴ Mikvé Israel in 1651 consisted of 50 to 100 members. By 1785 there were roughly 1,200 who owned as many as 5,534 African slaves by 1720; Emmanuel 1970, 288, 277.

³⁵⁵ Dutch is the official language on the island, and Castilian and English are taught in school.

community members,³⁵⁷ which indicates that this language functioned also at a cultural level, similar to what is seen in northwestern Luso-Sephardic centers. This linguistic coexistence between the two Iberian tongues can be seen in the epitaphs of the community cemetery, for example:

*Do glorioso
E bem aventurado varão
O douto e famoso Mosseh
Levy Maduro hazan e rabi
Do KK Mikve Israel fº
Em 27 Hesvan anno 5469
Sua alma goze da gloria
E a mosse dixे sube
Suposto **comueterse**
Meu corpo em poo ysinza na
Mizericordia divina confio
Que como cantou Mosseh
O Levita **assi** cantara meu
Espirito entre asan tidade
Dos anjos com ymnos de
Formosura³⁵⁸.*

.....
*Do bem aventurado
Abraham de Souza
Mendes que faleseo
Em dia de Simhat (To)ra
De 23 de tesry aº 5470
Sua alma goze da glória
Abraham de Souza
Mendes sepultado Yasse aquy **debaxo**
Desta lossa por **voluntad** de **Dios**
& **su** mandado que vino a acompanhar
Su amada espoza esperar enel de ser
Resusitado i gozar de **la** vida
Milagrosssa em **compania** de Hanoch
& Elias para **vivir**/ eternos i largos dias.³⁵⁹*

Certain words that seem to indicate Castilian influence include: *comueterse* (perhaps a misplaced diphthongization of the Castilian and Portuguese cometer(-se)-‘to commit’), *assi* (without the nasal -m, Portuguese assim, Castilian así-‘like so’), *debaxo* (Portuguese debaixo, Castilian debajo-‘beneath’), *voluntad* (Portuguese vontade, Castilian voluntad-‘will’), *Dios* (a direct loan

³⁵⁶ Heller 2008, 507; Joubert 2007.

³⁵⁷ Granda 1974; Also, Curaçao served as a trade intermediate in the slave trade between western Africa, and Caratgena de Indias and Puerto Bello. This also helps explain the purpose of Castilian in the community.

³⁵⁸ Emmanuel 1957, 209.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 213.

from Castilian-see Ch.1, 2, & 3), *su* (Portuguese *seu*, Castilian *su*-‘your’), *la* (Castilian singular feminine article), *compania* (Portuguese *companhia*, Castilian *compañía*-‘company’), and *vivir* (Portuguese *viver*, Castilian *vivir*-‘to live’). By the mid-18th century there are also some sermons written by Rabbi Jehacob Lopez da Fonseca and Semuel Mendes de Solla. However, these two rabbis were always in close affiliation with Amsterdam, and, for example, de Solla’s sermon *Triunfo da União contra o pernicioso vício da discórdia* was published in the city in 1750 (not to mention the author was born in Portugal³⁶⁰). As expected, his language highly resembles the variety of Portuguese spoken in Amsterdam and northwestern Europe (as discussed in Ch. 2).³⁶¹ Finally, some prayers are still recited today in Portuguese, and include: At board inaugurations: *Matanát Tzedaká pela saúde dos Senhores Parnassim salientes e entrantes*; during the holidays of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kipur: *Matanát Tzedaká para que Deus nos escreva no ‘Livro da Vida’*; to call for rain: *Matanát Tzedaká para que Deus nos conceda chuva de benção*; and to ask for the health of the sick: *Matanát Tzedaká pela saúde de...y para que sua saída seja para bem.*³⁶²

However, novel aspects to Portuguese linguistics in Luso-Sephardic communities include Papiamentu as a language of daily speech during the second half of the 18th century. According to May Henriquez, a resident linguist on the island, the Papiamentu spoken by the Luso-Sephardim shows strong Portuguese influence, in such words as: *bañu* (Standard Papiamentu [SP] *bañ* o-‘bathroom’), *festehá* (SP *celebrá*-‘to celebrate’), *fora* (SP *fuera*-‘outside’), *poko dia atras* (SP *poko dia despues*-‘a few days later’). Additionally, there are some words that are only found in Sephardic Papiamentu and seem to be from a Portuguese source (*bena, festa, goza, huña, kurigí, snoa, etc.*).³⁶³ Lastly, gerunds in Sephardic Papiamentu usually end in -u, and lack the diphthongization characteristic of the Portuguese language (*benendu, pidindu, komendu, etc.*).³⁶⁴

Moving away from the Dutch colonies, we will now focus on Luso-Sephardic settlers who came directly from England or via Portuguese or Dutch territories in the 17th century to territories controlled by the British in the New World. These Jews were generally welcomed in the English

³⁶⁰ Heller 509; Liebman 2009.

³⁶¹ Although, further studies may wish to include Curaçao in the corpus of documents showing linguist variation in northwestern Europe.

³⁶² Adopted from Joubert 2007.

³⁶³ *bem, festa, goza, unha, corrigi, esnoga>sinagoga*; Henriquez 1998.

³⁶⁴ Joubert 2007.

Caribbean as their familiarity with the colonial plantation system and the Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese trade circuits was highly coveted by the British wishing to lay a stake in West Indies commerce.³⁶⁵

While the Portuguese Jews were physically present, their language was much less so. The islands of Jamaica and Barbados hosted the largest Caribbean settlements, and so offer the greatest evidence to this effect. On Barbados, Portuguese Jewish settlers were admitted to the colony between the 1640s to 1660s, as the plantations on the islands transitioned to cultivating sugarcane, from the more traditional crops such as tobacco, cotton, and ginger. Records from 1680 indicate that there were 317 total Sephardic Jews on island, and represented one eighth of the population in Bridgetown. However, the community was always at a disadvantage, as Jews were not permitted to hire Christians, and so came to work mostly in finance, capital investment, and the exchange of luxury goods from Portugal, Holland and England. The little we can conclude about the usage of Portuguese suggests the language was used in trade and perhaps for daily communication until the close of the 18th century, after which it succumbed to the language of the overlords, English³⁶⁶.

The success of the Barbados Portuguese Jewish settlement was followed by the settlement of the Sephardim in Jamaica. At the end of the 17th century, the island hosted some 80 Sephardic families, most of which arrived from Suriname, Barbados, or smaller Nevis. Like in Barbados, the community was more involved in the exchange of trade items and tax collection than in the sugar industry.³⁶⁷ Language use on the island seemed also to gravitate towards English, as seen in the case of a Portuguese Jew based in Jamaica in 1660, Jacob Josua Bueno Enriquez, who in a petition to the the king of England refers to his partner Manoel de Fonseca who “...*sta oy en Londres en casa del Embagador d'Espagnia de Interprete por saber hablar la lengua Inglesa...*”³⁶⁸ Interestingly, the petition was written in Castilian, rather than Portuguese³⁶⁹. This language choice was most likely a result of the intended learned nature that would be expected of a petition to the king, while also reflective of the greater influence Castilian had over the London Luso-Sephardim (Ch. 2).

³⁶⁵ Merrill 1964.

³⁶⁶ Schomburgk 1848, 97.

³⁶⁷ Merrill 1964.

³⁶⁸ “...is today in London at the home of the Spanish Ambassador as an interpreter, in order to learn the English language”

³⁶⁹ Kayserling 1900.

Moreover, from this passage, and in consideration of the linguistic situation on Barbados, we can deduce that, at least within English mercantile networks, the English language was more of an asset to the merchants of the *nação portuguesa*, and that this is likely a good explanation as to why the language overcame Portuguese in most British colonies. As a poignant indication of how language adoption reflects identity, by the decline of the sugar industry in the 18th century, along with the dissipation of British Caribbean Jewry, many of the Luso-Sephardim chose to migrate to other Anglophone regions in either England or the North American colonies, rather than to other Portuguese-speaking colonies. Unlike in the situation of Brazilian Jewish Portuguese, in which a less restrictive society led to a reduction in “Jewish linguistic elements,” it seems that a similarly free atmosphere such as that of Jamaica and Barbados, causes instead pressure leading to the reinvention of linguistic affiliation altogether.

North America

In the aftermath of Dutch Brazil and the decline in Luso-Sephardic Jewry in the Caribbean, many members of the *nação portuguesa* made their way to the English colonies in North America. While the Portuguese language may have served as a language of trade and community in previous centuries, by the 18th century, not only had the European overseas empires reduced the need for inter-cultural agents, but also the *haskala*, or ‘Jewish Enlightenment,’ had begun to affect the Luso-Sephardim (especially those in England). Among the movement’s many ideals, Jews felt a newfound responsibility to adopt the language and identity of the country in which they settled, while still retaining the Hebrew language in association to the Jewish religion. The memory of an Iberian past still lingered, but in a much more liberated form: Portugal as the land of the oppressor, and England, for example, as the land of new opportunity. Naturally, as the Sephardim in London participated in trade with the English territories, many of the New World communities were impacted by such cultural thought, and soon English became a language of prestige, earning a merchant both respect and commercial connections.³⁷⁰

In North America, however, the first settlement of the Luso-Sephardim was not under English rule, but under the Dutch in New Amsterdam (what would become New York). This territory was controlled by the Dutch West India Company, which required that all civil,

³⁷⁰ Kiron 2006.

military, and judicial matters be conducted in Dutch. Nevertheless, an account from 1656 mentions a Jewish merchant, David Ferera, using the Portuguese language informally.³⁷¹ Even before this account, the first synagogue in North America was founded in 1654 by Portuguese Jews who had left Dutch Brazil, and still made use of the Portuguese, Castilian, and Hebrew language for different functions. After the English takeover of the city in 1664, the congregation remained, though throughout the course of history it came to mix with other Jewish groups, especially the Ashkenazim.

As the synagogue identified with, and was founded by, members of the *nação portuguesa*, its earliest minute books from 1728 to 1760 were written in Portuguese and English on facing pages. In 1995 Herman P. Solomon conducted a revised study of the Portuguese language used in the community records, and found that it had become heavily influenced by English, and seemed to be a literal translation with unnatural syntax.³⁷² For example, such phrases are used as: *postas em força* ('to put force in' = Port. 'pôr em vigor'); *em ordem do* ('in order to' = Port. 'com o fim do'); *refusar de* ['to refuse' = Port. 'negar-se, recusar']; and *aplicar-se por* ('apply for' = Port. 'solicitar'). Some lexical features that match usage in the Jewish Portuguese community in Amsterdam are also employed: *El Dio* (from Castilian), *congrega* (an Italian loan - Port. 'congregação'), and *esnoga* (Port. 'sinagoga'). What remained of the Portuguese prior to 1728 is still to be determined, though by then these Luso-Sephardim had lived for a half century under English rule. It seems that the Luso-Sephardic founding members of the congregation had also come to be the minority of the congregants, and so, similar to the case in Curaçao, English came to serve a *lingua franca* of worship. Finally, as already seen among the Luso-Sephardim in London, by the 18th century Castilian became the preferred 'language of nostalgia,' in place of Portuguese, which must have weakened the linguistic ties to Portuguese identity in New York, even more removed in time and space from Iberia.

Other Portuguese Jewish settlements in North America also seem to have been placed in a similar social context that favored English over Portuguese. In Newport, Rhode Island, 15 Sephardic families arrived in 1658, and by the 1690s they were joined by immigrants from

³⁷¹ Bernardini 2001, 382-383.

³⁷² Solomon 1995.

Barbados and Curaçao. However, by the 19th century the original congregation was dissolved partially as a result of intermarriage with other Jewish groups, including the Ashkenazim.³⁷³

In 1750, the synagogue Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim was founded in Charleston, although the first mention of Jews in the colony of South Carolina was as early as 1696. By the 18th century the congregation began to grow to significant numbers, as many Luso-Sephardic immigrants from London and the Netherlands were drawn by the colony's opportunities in commerce and agriculture.³⁷⁴ The members of the synagogue were also pioneers in the United States Reform Judaism movement of the 19th century, which in part emphasized the vernacular in worship. While some of the earliest documents, particularly liturgical works, were written in Portuguese and Castilian, it is clearly indicated that these works originated in Amsterdam. These works are better seen as a remnant of the community's development, and of the central position of Dutch Portuguese Jewry among the branches of the *nação portuguesa*. Nonetheless, in 1824 the trustees of the community petitioned for major reforms in the synagogue's administration, with one specification being the use of the English language.³⁷⁵ Although the petition was rejected leading to a rift in the community, it represents one of the earliest linguistic effects of the Reform movement on American Jewry—manifesting among the Luso-Sephardim as a forward movement away from an Iberian past. Moreover, it suggests that linguistic usage was much less associated with Luso-Sephardic identity in the United States, as a notion of *grandeza* associated to one's Sephardic heritage remained.

Finally, the case of settlement in Georgia by a mixed community of Sephardim and Ashkenazim appears to have begun shortly after the colonies founder, James Oglethorpe, arrived in late 1732. The language of these communities came to be English very quickly, although German and Yiddish seems to have remained a language spoken at home by the Ashkenazim (such as in the prominent Sheftall family).³⁷⁶ Perhaps then, at least in the early days of settlement, Portuguese may have been spoken among the Luso-Sephardim, especially as many of these settlers originated in London. However, by the 18th century many of London's Jewish Portuguese elite members began to associate with Christian high society,³⁷⁷ and so it seems that

³⁷³ Cf. Gutstein 1936.

³⁷⁴ Waddell 1997.

³⁷⁵ Philipson 1897.

³⁷⁶ Jones 2001.

³⁷⁷ Marcus 1951, 342-354.

within English realms a gravitation towards English usage went hand in hand with one's cultural and economic success.

The Spanish Americas

The settlement of the Luso-Sephardim in the Spanish Americas became especially salient during the Portuguese union with Habsburg Spain (1580-1640). These communities were importantly linked to the entire trade network of the *nação portuguesa*, and it seems that those Portuguese Jews or New Christians that remained in Spanish territories into later centuries were absorbed relatively quickly into Castilian-language communities both for economic purposes and as a way to conceal their identities as both “Portuguese” and Jewish.³⁷⁸ Predominantly, the Portuguese New Christians and crypto-Jews involved in the slave trade and other less lucrative exchanges were attracted to such settlements. Many merchants in fact preferred to sell slave cargos to the Spanish Indies rather than to Brazil, as the former paid in silver, whereas Brazilians paid in sugar, rum, and tobacco.³⁷⁹ Being the Luso-Sephardim major players in the Atlantic slaves trade, it seems natural that some would remain as settled agents at the opposite end of circuits in the Spanish colonies. Despite the constant threat of the Spanish Inquisition, many still afforded to live comfortably in Peru and the Río de la Plata areas, though Portuguese merchants could be found virtually anywhere in the Spanish New World.³⁸⁰

However, the Portuguese settlers in the Spanish colonies were often stigmatized, and at times even forbidden legally from colonizing. This mostly stemmed from their advantage in trade as affiliates to Portugal and their special privileges within the *asiento*³⁸¹ system. Their establishment also led in part to the invigoration of the Spanish Inquisition in the New World, where, unlike in Brazil, tribunals were established (in Lima and Mexico city in 1570, and in Cartagena de Indias in 1610). The majority of New Christians arrested and executed by the Lima Inquisition either were born in Portugal or had parents that were natives to the kingdom.

³⁷⁸ Boxer 1977, 272.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 103.

³⁸⁰ Canabrava 1984, 131-133; Hanke 1961.

³⁸¹ The Portuguese were given exclusive rights to slave trade contracts with Brazil, while also being able to trade with all other Habsburg territories: cf. Disney 2009, 208.

Moreover, as identifiably Portuguese, they were doubly suspect of being loyal to Portugal (in revolt against the Spanish occupation) and of being judaizers.³⁸²

Regarding the linguistic situation of the Luso-Sephardim in the Spanish colonies, it seems Castilian was quickly adopted as a language that was both similar and already culturally integrated with the Luso-Sephardim. Moreover, given the high levels of persecution and surveillance, it would not be surprising to find an account that these settlers attempted to disguise themselves linguistically by avoiding speaking Portuguese. Nonetheless, some traces of the Portuguese language among Jewish settlers can be found. Germán Granda schematizes the possible origins of “Portugueseisms” in New World Castilian that survive today as: A. By direct routes (1. Portuguese emigration, 2. slaves who spoke a Portuguese-based creole, 3. Galician emigration, and 4. Brazilian influence), and B. By indirect routes (1. emigration from western Andalucía, 2. emigration from the Canary Islands, 3. emigration from León, and 4. Maritime Portuguese vocabulary).³⁸³ Though he does not mention Jews specifically, many of his examples are taken from areas known to have been exposed (sometimes heavily) to a Jewish influence, and so the Luso-Sephardim must have contributed at some level to the uptake of such lexicon.³⁸⁴

Conclusion

By the close of the 17th century a major shift in the colonial economic system was underway. Whereas initially the linguistic skills and mobility of the Luso-Sephardim gave them a distinct advantage, overseas exchange moved in the direction of major trade empires in which traders benefited from concentrating their efforts within a single political sphere.³⁸⁵ Many times this led to the adoption of local and economically advantageous languages other than Portuguese,³⁸⁶ especially in Luso-Sephardic settlements outside of Portuguese control.

To summarize, it seems that communities across Africa and Asia do not offer direct linguistic evidence, but serve to further illustrate how linguistic identity developed in parallel to trade relations. Further studies should be conducted to determine if Jewish linguistic elements

³⁸² Silverblatt 2000.

³⁸³ Granda

³⁸⁴ For a complete reference to such words considered “Portugueseisms” in Castilian, see Gregorio Salvador’s *Elementos Constitutivos del Español: Lusismos*; Salvador 1966.

³⁸⁵ Bernardini 2001, 513.

³⁸⁶ Whose empire was in irreversible decline.

remain in the Portuguese-based creoles and local languages. In the New World, there is substantially more evidence of Portuguese spoken by Jewish settlers, although these communities were either heavily connected with their European counterparts or assimilated due to sociopolitical conditions. Similar to Africa and Asia, Portuguese-based creoles in the New World should be analyzed further for remnants of a Jewish linguistic influence expanding on studies done in Suriname and Curaçao.

For the seemingly unsubstantial cases of linguistic usage in Brazilian and British territories, it is by their very assimilation that we can in fact make larger claims about identity among the Luso-Sephardim. Regions such as Brazil, Barbados, and Jamaica show that when permitted in an atmosphere of lesser restriction, a distinctive Jewish Portuguese identity, especially associated to language, becomes almost untraceable. Moreover, in the very liberal atmosphere of the English North American colonies, many communities actively shed their Iberian past, and in subsequent centuries parted with the memory of oppression by embracing the English language and American democracy. These histories of assimilation are interestingly parallel to the accounts of crypto-Judaism in Brazil, recorded by Nathan Wachtel. He shows that in the collective memory of crypto-Jews, we can see how their religion evolved from what was once Judaism into a cult of obligation that ritualizes the preservation of a unique past. Now that returning to Judaism poses no threat in Brazil, he observes that reconversion seems to degrade a certain sense of identity.³⁸⁷ As the other side of the same coin, an open society's gradual abandonment of a particular language in which members are still conscious of its symbolic representation shows that Brenor's "Jewish linguistic repertoire" can be turned against identity itself, and in effect leads to the epitomized "de-judaization" of a language, that is, its rejection altogether as a functional element in a Jewish society.³⁸⁸ Extending this interpretation further, we can see that linguistic affiliation had a crucial function unique to varieties of Jewish Portuguese in the New World, as through the adoption of standard Brazilian Portuguese or English these groups asserted a Luso-Sephardic identity that could be independent of its past.

³⁸⁷ Wachtel 2013, 185, 255.

³⁸⁸ Brenor 2008; Take also for example, the debate over Yiddish or Hebrew usage in the Zionist movement.

CONCLUSION

Language as a Proxy for Sephardic Identity

A compilation and reanalysis of linguistic evidence from the *nação portuguesa* suggests that what began as a sociolect in Portugal turned into a multifaceted ethnolect in its diaspora. While prior to expulsion the Jews of Portugal were more or less integrated into Portuguese society, an interconnected Luso-*anusim*,³⁸⁹ bound together by a kin-based network of commerce and culture, emerged subsequent to the expulsion and stigmatization of Jews in Iberian domains. Thus, as in the case of many so-called “Jewish Languages,” those other than the Jews themselves seem to have been the major driving force in the creation of Jewish varieties of the Portuguese language.³⁹⁰

More consequentially, what can be taken from the wide range of speech forms in these disjointed Jewish communities is a contribution to understanding how a “Jewish repertoire of linguistic elements” functions within a single language category. Although in the minority of what variation occurs, certain Jewish elements, such as *guai*, *El Dio*, *esnoga*, and other Hebrew loans in direct reference to their specific religious meaning, can be found throughout the dispersed settlements of the Luso-Sephardim. However, the “Jewish” character of Luso-Sephardic speech stands out most clearly when we embed linguistic usage within the historical and sociological contexts of the members of the *nação*. Unlike for other varieties of Portuguese, Jewish usage was exposed to the influence of a tremendous range of languages—from Malayalam to Italian. Although still remaining with one foot in Lusitania, it would have been nearly impossible for the Luso-Sephardim to stay unaffected by this plethora of cultures, attracted as they were to the most far-flung stretches of the globe by opportunities in international trade as well as by removedness from the Inquisition. Moreover, it was no coincidence that nearly all Portuguese Jewish communities came to establish themselves in locations renowned as melting pots of civilizations. There not only would Judaism be more tolerated, but the Luso-Sephardim could also put their multilingualism to work by acting as middlemen and cross-cultural brokers. Thus, in defining what made the language of the *nação portuguesa* “Jewish,” we can certainly claim the obvious—Judaism itself—though more

³⁸⁹ Those forced to leave Judaism.

³⁹⁰ Cf. Fishman 1985; Wexler 2006; Brenor 2007, 2008; Hary 2009, Ch. 1.

importantly, we must also factor in the multicultural *convivência*, turned niche market, of the Luso-Sephardim.

Secondly, regarding the Portuguese language as a whole, it seems that lexicosemantic, and phonetic/orthographic variation occurring among Jewish exiles fell within the entire Lusophone spectrum of linguistic possibilities. Although a specific set of particularities (such as various nasal orthographies and phonetics, a differentiated sonorant consonantal system, and *ou-oi/y* diphthong alternation) seem to be characteristic of most major varieties of Jewish speech, they can also be found individually in many non-Jewish dialects of locations where Portuguese is or was spoken. However, on a deeper level, there seems to exist a kind of morphosyntactic variation that is particular to Jewish speech, though most often due to the influence of neighboring languages rather than originating from the Luso-Sephardim themselves. Therefore, such variation is locally based, and differentiates, for example, the lectology of Amsterdam from that of Livorno. Additionally, etymological modifications, usually in the form of reinserted assimilated consonants (especially in northwestern Europe and the Italian Peninsula³⁹¹), show a clear division between erudition in Luso-Sephardic and other Portuguese centers, and further contribute to the conceptualization of a Jewish Portuguese ethnolectic group.

If we combine both sociological and linguistic factors within the history of the *nação portuguesa*, we see that the Portuguese language functioned for the benefit of a particular trade circuit rather than a Jewish community *per se*. While language certainly played a role in reengineering and maintaining a Jewish identity—through either Portuguese, Castilian, or Hebrew—examples such as Venice, the Balkans, and the Levant show how language adoption is indicative of the Luso-Sephardim identifying either as “*os da nação portuguesa*,” or, more broadly as part of the Sephardim. Fascinatingly, the converse examples in Brazil and the Anglophone New World show how the gradual erosion or rejection of speech tendencies, and languages altogether, can be interpreted as a clear turning point in the collective experience of a Jewish exile group. In tracing identity among the Luso-Sephardim, language can serve as a proxy to show how evolving kin affiliation and business ties superseded the need to remain within the limits of one’s historical origins, and offers a prime example of how we can understand identity in post-exile communities.

³⁹¹ Cf. Germano 1968; Tavani 1959a, 1959b, 1960.

APPENDIX

Transcription Excerpts of Portuguese Language Manuscripts from **Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos** (Amsterdam)

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos, "The Manuscripts." Last modified 2014. Accessed January 29, 2014. <http://www.etsheimmanuscripts.nl/manuscripts/>.

Manuscript List:

EH47B11.15 & EH47B11.16

EH47D07

EH47E05

EH47D32.10

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos 47B11.15 & 47B11.16, fs. 13v & 180r.

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos. 47D07. fs. 2r & 54v.

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos. 47E05. fs. 6v & 6r.

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos. 47D32.10. fs.191v & 192v.

COMMENTS:

Hebrew text is omitted and indicated by —. The transcription separates articles (o, a, os, as) that in some texts are written attached to the proceeding word. Also, the graphs ‘v’ and ‘u’ are difficult to distinguish, and so ‘v’ is transcribed (as it would be in standard Portuguese) unless an ‘u’ is very clearly written.

Excerpts from **EH47B11.15 & EH47B11.16**

Hebrew and Portuguese version of the narrative of the rescue of David Curiel from the hands of a murderer. Amsterdam, 1628.

On f. 13v signature ‘David Curiel’.

Contents:

f. 1: Hebrew laudatory poem by Moses Gideon Abudiente.

f. 2r-9v: Hebrew version.

f. 10r-13v: Portuguese version.

Hebrew and Portuguese / Paper / 15,7 x 9,6 cm. / [13] ff. / Square unvocalised writing and current Iberian hand / No titles / At the beginning and end of the Hebrew text nicely drawn ornaments / 17th century copy.

Fuks 342.

f.180r - Online Image:EH47B11.15.184

Louuado sera o meo redemidor sancto de Israel, escudo camparo aos quase confiao nelle, que não enuesunta que morra o mao salvo que torne de suas careiras as mãos e viva, piadozo e gracioso seo nome:~

M 20: de **Adar Risson** 5388: as 3 datar de veyo a ver diamantes a minha

cara o perfido alemão, em campá de Mosseh de Casseres, émostrandolhe duas sortes que tinham me disse que vivia dispois as 4 ou 5 datar de com pessoa que os entendesse melhor, e que compraria todos e daria o dinherio fogo, respondilhe que entao era escuro pera ver diamantes que seria mais conveniente pera outro dia pella menha ficando nisso, dispois departido demim disse eu a Mosseh de Casserez que nao me contentava tal homem bello respondeo dando dinherio como diz sera bom:~

Naquella route dormi muito arepouzo e pella menha dise a minha prima como havia tido sonno muy quieto; sendo uto oras da menha sexta feira 21: de Adar Risson bateu a minha porta o filho de tortura, preguntando por mim, e dizendolhe que esta aquy o homem per aver os Diamantes; Ouvindo eu lhe mandey dizer que tomasse dentro em meya hora que estaria levantando no tempo que veyo amoca¹ ariba andou elle vendo por baixo as casas e portas segundo viu semuel que entao estava em casa; Como o mandey tornar se foy com Mosseh de Casseres a quem havia aprazado...

f.13v - Online Image:EH47.B11.15.180

...ate o dia este o coração deste enemigo era grande e saaó sua maldade o matou, Eu segui em milhoria esperando am A. renouey forças até Sabat Agadol em que saaó de todo, vim apparecerme diante de A. meo Dio trazendo o canastilho de louvores diante do Ehhah de sua sanctidade e dizendo o Arameo me quiz desperder e descender a estreitezas minha alma, e andey com poucas esperanças de vida, e com afficao, e dureza de suas chagas foy passando em grandes sendo, e em fortes seendo, e esclamey a A. Dio de meus Pais e ouvio minha angustia meo lazerio e meo aperto, permitindo por seus quizes ocultos, que o lugar de Bet ahhavim para que esta va sentonciado enchessem os ossos dema senhora que vierão de França eem 28 de Adar seny faraó aly enterrados por cujos merecimentos prinsipalnte de Abraham, Ishak, Jaacob, meus Pais fuy escapado da norte e por piadades de meo Dio que me escapou uzou as que tenho, e terey vivas na memoria para celebrar Purim de anno em anno em 21 do mez de Adar Risson lembransa a escapa dura milagroza d minha vida, e castigo do Alemaó mao, a memoria dos maos seja por comida, e nos Israel apegados com A. nosso Dio vimos todos nos o 2e e inifinitos annos apara de coração o seruimos, Amem, David Curiel.

Excerpts from EH47D07

Libro yntitulado/ Sapha Berura/ hoc est/ Labia clara da/ gramatica hebrea/ composto os o hacham/ Menasse ben Ysrael/ נרנר/ o talmid/ Selomo de Olivera/ ויצי facit/ em Amsterdam 5407/ ק"לפ ז"ה תה"ה ברור שפה

Hebrew grammar in Portuguese by Rabbi Menasseh Ben Israel, copied by his pupil Solomon de Oliveira.

Hebrew and Portuguese / Paper / 14,8 x 9,8 cm. / 64 + [8] ff. Current Iberian hand, square

vocalised and Sephardic cursive writing.
Fuks 326. Kaplan 91 (wrongly referred to as 49 D 7)

f.2r - Online Image:EH47D07.002

Libro primeiro em o qual se trata das letras e pontos

Cap. 1 trata das letras

1. A gramática **he huã** arte mediante a qual se aprende a bem falar
2. Esta se divide em duas partes a saber nas letras e pontos e vocabulos q~ delles se compoem
3. A lingua hebreia consta de vinte e duas letras todas consoantes e saó --- ay alem destas as **sinco** chamados finaes que saó ---; e entre todas fazem numero de vinte e sete
4. As --- (simplices) que naó tem maes que **huã** forma como saó --- se podem colocar no principio meyo e fim da **palabra**

f.54v - Online Image:EH47D07.054

...Liuxo quarto da gramatica hebreia

Em o qual trata da --- adverbio cap. 1 trata em geral dos adverbios
Avendo tratado no precedents liuros das letras nomes e verbos ---
neste trata dos adverbios mediantes as quase se faz sua oraçáo
perfeicta como no exemplo sedi sermos...

Excerpts from **EH47E06**

Kol Tefilah ve-Kol Zimrah; collection of prayers and poetry recited in the Portuguese synagogues of Amsterdam from the earliest days of Jewish settlement in the city in 1597 to 1782. Collected and copied by David Franco Mendes. Amsterdam, 1792.

Contents:

- f. 4r-5v: Portuguese poetry for the Union of the three Sepharic congregations in Amsterdam, 1639: Quartetos/ Na Celebração do Estreamento da Esnoga de T[almud] T[orah]/ na União das Quehilot.
- f. 7: Speech of Menasseh ben Israel at the occasion of the visit of Queen Henriette Maria of England and Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange in the Sephardic synagogue of Amsterdam, 1642.
- f. 9: Portuguese prayer for the 9th of Ab, recited in 1670.
- f. 11r-13r: Poems recited at the inauguration of the Sephardic synagogue of Amsterdam in 1675 (a printed Hebrew poem is also added).
- f. 14r-16r: Hebrew and Portuguese prayer for William III of Orange for a safe passage to England, 1688.
- f. 30r: Hebrew poem of Simhat Torah by Solomon de Meza (acrostic). 9 printed ff. with a Hebrew prayer to avert an epidemy, 1727, with written Portuguese title.
- f. 32r: Hebrew poem by Yehiel Foa, recited in 1729. 13 printed ff. with a Hebrew prayer to avert a current plague of ship worms, 1732, with written Portuguese title.
- f. 33r-39v: Hebrew poems by Moses Hayim Luzzatto, recited in 1739. 4 printed ff. with Hebrew prayer for success in the war against the French, 1747, with written Portuguese title. 1749. 7 printed ff. with Hebrew prayer to avert earthquakes, with written Portuguese title.
- f. 53r: Portuguese poem for the installation of William Vth of Orange.

f. 54r-56v: Hebrew poem with Portuguese title for the marriage of William Vth of Orange.
 f. 58r-62v: Hebrew and Portuguese prayer for the marriage of William Vth of Orange.
 f. 64r-66v: Hebrew prayer with Portuguese title for a speedy delivery of the Princess of Orange, 1769.
 f. 71r-72v: Hebrew prayer with Portuguese title for an easy pregnancy of the Princess of Orange, 1772.
 f. 89r-90v: Portuguese note of royalty who visited the Sephardic synagogue of Amsterdam between 1642 and 1781.
 Hebrew, Portuguese and Spanish / Paper / 13,9 x 8,3 cm. / [90] ff. / Sephardic cursive writing with square headings and current writing / Title written in engraved frame, cut out and pasted upon the page.
 Fuks 448. Kaplan 3.

f.6v & 6r - Online Image:EH47E5.006

Aos noblissimos Estados & a N^a Alt^a serenissimos de cujas felicidades & victoriosas armas fomos protegidos & amparados reconhecemos por Senhores. & assim nós em sinal de gratidaõ por os muy altos & poderosos estados, por vossa invietisma alteza e pelo nobilissimo prudentissimo magistrado d'estad indita Cid^e de Amsterd^m cotidianam ou o omnipotente **Ds.** pela felicidade do celissimo Principe **Wilhermo**, Esperando lhes não seraõ ingratas pois foraõ sempre estas muy aceitay aos Monarcas da Percia e Emperadores do Romanos. E assim farey fim, pedindo a o altissimo Sr. guarde e exalto a vossa serenissima alteza, junto com celcissimo Principe **Wilhermo** para bem & prosperidade nossa e de esta nobilissima & Amada Patria.

Excerpts from EH47D32.10

Fragments of a commentary on the thirteen articles of faith of Maimonides with Portuguese translation, 17th century.
 Hebrew and Portuguese / Paper / 18,4 x 13,6 cm. / 9 ff. / Neat rabbinic cursive writing with square headings and some calligraphic writing / Bound together with several other manuscripts.
 Fuks 175.

f.191v - Online Image:EH47D32.191

---. A porta do rico ay Hirmaõs e amigos a porta do pobre não hay hirmaõs nem amigos: o premio do daras he corer o premio de sabat calab he estar apertado o premio de ouvir he entender: o premio da caza do abel he estar calado o premio de **jejuar** he dar **sedaca**: **guay** do homem que encontrou com elle a cobra **guay** da cobra que encontrou com elle ribi hanina filho de docaguay da masa que ô forneiro atestigua sobre ella que **he** mã: **guay** do senhorio que enterra a seus donos: **guay** do generancio que perde seu governador **guay** do navio q' perde seu leme: Não todo homem merece estar a duas mezas: não o prezo se solta **asi** mesmo da caza da prizaõ: não o homem se arependa sobre sua colora...

f.192v - Online Image:EH47D32.192

...em sua presenza y não rompera a suas palavras y he obrigado para

alevantarse en sua presenza desde que o veja de longe enchimento de
seus olhos athe que o veja de longe enchimento de seus olhos athe
quese afaste delle que não veja sua statura ê depois **asim** se asentará:
e ainda q'esteja montando necessita para alevantarse em sua presenza
que he reputado como si andase: e todo que veda seu dicipulo de
servirlo veda delle merce e descarga delle o temor de Ds: e todo
dicipulo que desprezarem qual qr honra de seu mestre cauza devindade
q'se afasta de Ysraël. Fin.

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BS – Anonymous. Collected by Nunes, José Joaquim, *Crestomatia Arcaica*, 3. ed. Lisboa, Liv. Clássica Ed., 1943, pg. 52.

CR – Taveirós, Paio Soares de. No mundo nom me sei parelha. Cancioneiro da Ajuda - A 38

MN – Cotom, Afonso Anes do. *Meestre Nicolás, a meu cuidar*. Cancioneiro da Biblioteca Nacional - B 1584, V 1116. [13th century]

RR – Aesop, and J. Leite de Vasconcellos. 1906. *O livro de Esopo: fabulario português medieval, publicado conforme a um manuscripto de seculo XV existente na Bibliotheca Palatina de Vienna de Austria*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional.

SANS - Nunes, Airas. *Porque no mundo mengou verdade*. Cancioneiro da Biblioteca Nacional - B 871, V 455. [13th century]

SG – Piel, Joseph M., Irene Freire Nunes, and Ivo Castro. 1989. *A Demanda do Santo Graal*. [Lisbon]: Impr. Nacional-Casa da Moeda. [15th century]

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Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, *Chancelaria de D. Manuel I.* 1482-1496

Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, *Ordenações de D. Afonso V.* 2013.

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Northwestern European Corpus

17th Century Texts:

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos 47B11.15 & 47B11.16, fs. 13v & 180r.

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos. 47D07. fs. 2r & 54v.

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos. 47E05. fs. 6v & 6r.

Ets Haim Bibliotheek/Livraria Montezinos. 47D32.10. fs.191v & 192v.

Table I: List of all sources for included examples in Germano thesis.

Title	Author	Abbreviation	Year	Notes
Princípio de Ciência, ou Gramática Hebraica, por um methodo breve, claro, facil, e distincto	Selomoh Rephael de Jacob Leon (Leão) Templo	GH	1703 (5463)	Amsterdam published by Emanuel Atias, at author's expense.
Tesouro dos vocábulos das duas Línguas Portuguesa e Bélgica	Abraham Alewyn and Jan Colle	TVL	1718	Woodnshat der twee Taalen Portugaesn en Nedertuitscht. Door Mr. Alewyn, en Jan Colle. AM
Sermão compost e pregado por R. Semuel Mendes de Sollas em este K.K. de T.T.	R. Semuel Mendes de Sollas	SS	1724	Saturday Emor, 20 of Hyár, year 5484. AM in the house of Ishac de Cordova, 28 ^a of Elul, 5484
Sermão pregado por R. Abraham Mendez Chumazero no K.K. de Talmud Torá	R. Abraham Mendez Chumazero	SC	1738	On Shabbat Emor, 20 Hyar, 5498. Amsterdam, pub. by Oficina Tipográfica de Arnoldus Lobedianus
Sermão gratulatório, pregado na inclita Jesibah de Neve Sedek em Sabath Balak, 14 Tamuz, Anno 5517.	Jacob de Selomoh Hisquiau Saruco	SG	1757	Amsterdam
Sermão moral, pregado no K.K. de T.T. por H.H.R. Jahacob Lopes da Fonseca, Rab. Eleito do K.K. Mikve Israel na ilha de Curaçau, em Sabath Aharé Moth,	R. Jahacob Lopez da Fonseca	SMC	1763	Printed by author. AM. Pub. by David de Rephael Meldola
Aviso espirituais e instruções sagradas, para cultivar o engenho da juventude, no amor, & temor divino.	Ishac de Leon	AEIS	1766 (5526)	Author was grammarian and professor in AM
O livro das “Pregoems” dos Judeus Portugueses de Hamburgo	Alfonso Cassuto	LPH	1773	In RLu, vol. XXXI, 1933, 80-89
Sermão moral sobre o temor heóic, que pregou neste K.K. de Talmud Torá	R. Ishac de Eliahu Acohen Belinfante	SMTH	1775	Sabath Quedossim. AM. Pub. Gerard Johan Janson.
Sermão penitencial	R. Semuel Mendes de Solla	SPS	1785	Sabath Nitsabim and Vajelech, 35 Elul 5544. Pub. Van de J. Proops AM
Nova grammatical portugueza dividida em	Abraham Meldola	NGP	1785	Hamburg. M.C. Book

VI partes				
Triunfos da Virtude	Acohen D'Azevedo	TV	1788	In honor of the birthday of William of Orange V. March 8. AM.
Lições de Leitura Portuguesa, para o uso da escola dos pobres dos Israelitas Portugueses em Amsterdam – Parte primeira.	M.C. Belinfante	LLP	1816	Amsterdam

Compilations of northwestern Jewish Portuguese from 20th century:

RHL – J.A. van Praag: *Restos de los idiomas hispanolusitanos entre los sefardies de Amsterdam* in BRAE, vol. XVIII 1931 pg. 177-201.

PJE – M.L. Wagner: *As influências recíprocas entre o português e o judeo-espanhol*, in RevPort., vol. XV 1950, pg. 189-195.

PC – I.S. Emmanuel: *El portugués en la Sinagoga Mikve Israel de Curaçao*, in “Tesoro de los Judios e Sefardies,” vol. I, 1959 XXI-XXXI.

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